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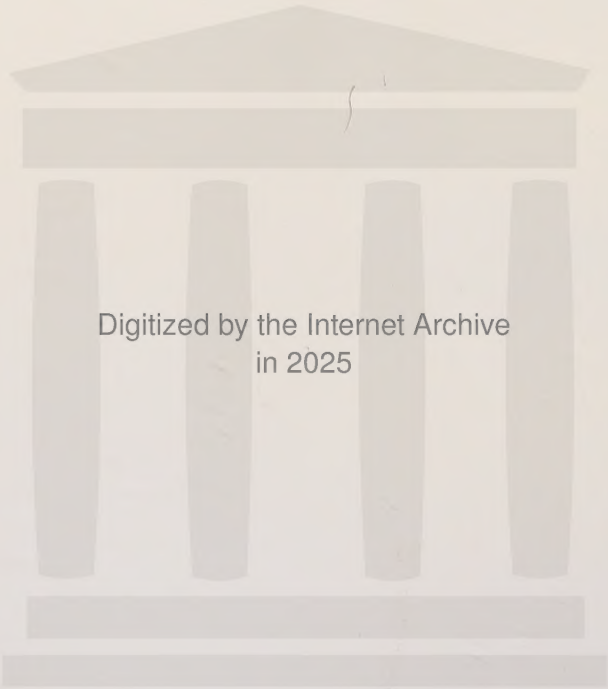

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LIFE AND LETTERS IN ROMAN AFRICA

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LIFE AND LETTERS IN ROMAN AFRICA

BY

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LIFE AND LETTERS IN ROMAN AFRICA

CHAPTER I

THE AFRICAN PROVINCES

'Die beiden Schöpfungen Caesars, das Keltenland und Nord-Africa, sind Trümmerbauten geblieben.'—MOMMSEN.

THE small proconsular province which was annexed by Rome at the close of the third Punic War, by the successive absorptions of the Tripolitan district and the client kingdoms of Numidia and Mauritania, had by the reign of Claudius grown to a domain extending from the Atlantic to the Greater Syrtis, and bounded on the south by the Atlas range and its continuations. It now included four provinces—Africa proper, Numidia, Mauritania Cæsariensis, and Mauritania Tingitana—with the seats of government at Carthage, Cirta, Cæsarea, and Tingi, respectively. The district lay between two nearly parallel lines of mountains, the southerly separating it from the Sahara; the northern, of less altitude, sloping down to the Mediterranean shore, and having on the northern face the principal ports.

There were no wide plains of great fertility, but many valleys and the lower slopes of the mountains could be made productive by careful agriculture; and the valley of the Bagradas near Carthage, together with parts of Numidia, were as rich and populous as the Nile region of Egypt. Even to the north of Atlas, however, especially towards Mauritania, were many treeless wastes, interspersed with salt lakes, and the southern frontier was constantly exposed to the forays of robber tribes from the great desert. The climate was semi-tropical, with no winter, but a two-months rainy season; and in spite of the prevalence of hot dry winds, and dangers from serpents and scorpions, it was considered by the Romans very healthy.[1]

Corn was throughout the staple product; as early as the middle of the first century B.C. the population of Rome subsisted largely on African supplies, and a special frumentary fleet was established under the Antonines for its conveyance to Italy. The more stable condition of affairs under the empire also led to the plantation of extensive vine and olive yards, and oil became one of the main exports, being in special request among bathers at Rome. Considerable remains of an oil factory exist near Theveste, with a large hall having rows of columns

[1] *Cf.* Sall. *Jug.* 17: 'plerosque senectus dissolvit.' This is confirmed by the great ages recorded in the African inscriptions. The scorpion was so much associated with Africa as sometimes to be given as a symbol to be held by the figure of Africa on imperial coins. *Cf.* below, p. 56.

and a number of olive-presses. The Phœnicians had been noted for their attention to natural products, and many of the plants and vegetables which were widely cultivated by Roman settlers owed their introduction to the Carthaginians. Such were the olive, vine, artichoke, pomegranate, and date-palm, a branch of which last appears on Carthaginian coins by the side of the horse. On Punic Christian tombs such a branch is often united to a cross.

Isolated farmhouses, fortified near the southern frontier, were scattered among the more fertile parts; and though the wide estates held by absentee owners, and later the large imperial domains, became as common as in Italy and Sicily, they were often divided among free tenant farmers instead of being worked by slave-gangs. The country was a dry one, and seldom well wooded. Irrigation had therefore to be carefully studied, and rain was preserved in tanks placed on the heights or in cisterns at intervals along the chief military roads. Low-lying fields and gardens were watered by artificial canals, which were dug out or cleared on the approach of rain. In the heat of the day bees clustered round these streams, affording to the poetic imagination a simile for the eager rush to the water of an exhausted army.[1]

The manufacture of purple dye set up by the Carthaginians continued under the Romans, and the dye was also obtained from the Atlantic coast of Mauritania. There was much trade in woollen goods,

[1] Coripp. *Joh.* VII. 339; *cf.* 218.

skins, fruit, and sponges, and, by means of caravans, in negro slaves, gold dust, ivory, ebony, and in elephants or other wild beasts intended for public spectacles in the great towns of Europe. Commerce with the interior was greatly facilitated by the introduction of camels under the Romans, and an important trade route from the land of the Garamantes to the ports of Tripoli was secured under Augustus by the expedition of Cornelius Balbus.[1] Many districts were noted for quarries of white or pink marble, and in the ruins of Carthaginian buildings may be found marbles of the favourite yellow or brown tint dug from the imperial quarries at Simuthu, near Hippo, but often called Numidian from Tabraca, the port of shipment. Porphyry and onyx, used in the finest African building, were found in Mauritania.

The absence of any neighbouring civilized State made it possible to defend this extensive region by means of a single legion, with some auxiliary forces and Moorish militia. The headquarters of the legionaries were at first at Theveste, later farther west at Lambæsis, where they were able to hold the approaches of the Aurus range against the wild Gætulian and Garamantian tribesmen. A small detachment from the legion, together with a few urban cohorts, was stationed at Carthage to preserve order in that excitable but seldom mutinous capital; and in the Antonine period other detachments were distributed along the southern

[1] Plin. *N.H.* V. 5, 36.

limes, as well as in some of the oases to the south of the mountains. All important passes or roads were thus guarded by fortified posts, consisting of a square enclosure with towers, and of quarters for the soldiers; also providing a refuge for the neighbouring farmers in case of a raid. Isolated towers were scattered along the line joining such *burgi*, as they were afterward called, and on these beacons could be kindled, or signals made by raising or lowering beams of wood, so as to concentrate troops at the point of danger. The barbarians who threatened these provinces were usually marauding bands, incapable of acting in concert, but further help could be brought from Spain or Cyrenaica if needed.

The *legio tertia Augusta* remained in Africa for three centuries, and many remains of its fixed camp at Lambæsis are preserved, as well as of the neighbouring town which grew up to provide residences for the officers and soldiers. It was legally a *municipium*, with forum, capitol, temples, and *scholæ* or club-rooms for the various grades in the service. The numerous inscriptions from here in the eighth book of the *Corpus* give a good idea of the position of such a military town, the inhabitants of which were gradually becoming more and more national, both in birth and sentiment, without losing their loyalty to the empire.

The civil government varied according to the degree of civilization which the communities had attained. The Punic towns, with their locally elected *suffetes*, and a constitution very similar to

that of Italian municipalities, were left almost untouched till the time of the Antonines, when they had become sufficiently Romanized to accept the usual government of *duoviri* and *decuriones* without any real break. Some received Latin rights, and a few Roman, but these were sparingly granted in the earlier period. Libyans, so far as they were settled in regular communities, were treated similarly, but the conditions of these people varied so greatly that no general principles can be given. Some had the greater or lesser franchise (probably only when a certain number of Italian settlers had been joined to the community), and were of course under the usual municipal system. Among other peoples we hear of a *princeps*, or headman—either a Roman or a native—who resided in some fortified village or *castellum*, aided in some cases by a small body of councillors[1] (for, like the present-day Berbers, the Libyans inclined to democracy), and was responsible to the imperial government. This was chiefly in Southern Numidia and Mauritania. If the tribe were important, a regular prefect might be detailed by the governor, or legionary commander, to supervise it;[2] and such officers, if efficiently supported, seem to have been successful, and not really unpopular with the natives, who preferred military to civil rule. The wide tolerance shown to native religions is illustrated

[1] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 1824: 'Princeps et undecimprimus gentis Saboidum'; and Boissière, *Hist. de la Conquête, etc., du Nord d'Afrique*, p. 391 *et seq.*

[2] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 2715.

by dedications in Latin to Moorish divinities such as Bacax.[1] In Mauritania, however—less fruitful than the other regions, and accordingly less thoroughly Romanized — semi-independent settlements were allowed to remain round the remoter strongholds.[2] Their chiefs were tributary to the empire, but, if aided by the wholly free tribes to the south and west, might prove formidable enemies. These men often served in the Roman armies with auxiliary bodies armed in native fashion, and, when they dared to utilize their military experience against their employers, proved exceedingly difficult to reduce. A good idea of the appearance of such Moorish irregulars can be formed from Trajan's Column, on which those who fought for the empire in Dacia appear riding small unbridled horses, and wearing short tunics gathered up at the shoulders, the hair curled tightly round the head; they carry a small shield, and were probably armed with lances.

Besides the Punic and Libyan communities there were numerous veteran and other European colonies, mostly planted in the period of Cæsar and Augustus, either as entirely new foundations or added to already existing societies. Italian traders and speculators appear in Africa in considerable numbers even at an earlier date than these colonies, but few Romans of high rank became permanent settlers. Nobility of birth was little regarded; the strength

[1] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 2583; *cf.* 4033.

[2] *Cf.* Amm. 29, p. 399. *Rex* is sometimes used in inscriptions of the chiefs of such communities.

of the country lay in the middle and commercial classes, who for the most part took the place of any real aristocracy.

A few characteristics of the races which inhabited Roman Africa may be added. The Phœnicians were numerous only near the coast, but here most of the chief towns were under their control, and they supplied a large proportion of the craftsmen, traders, and sailors. The influence of this Oriental element appears in the habits, costume, pronunciation, and religion, of the provincials.[1] A rich and vivid, but sometimes unhealthy, imagination characterizes them, resulting in mysticism in religion, a proneness to magical arts, and showiness and exaggeration in language. There is the desire to convert or persuade hearers at all costs, to persecute those who resist; and by the side of all this the strong practical interests of a race of traders, a love of country life, and of the products of that careful agricultural system which the Romans inherited from their predecessors. The Italian element was stronger in Carthage than in other African towns;[2] the Phœnicians resided chiefly in one quarter, and the richer families among them gradually retired to their country seats. In neighbouring towns Punic remained the common speech of the lower orders, and in a few, such as Leptis and Oea, was used officially till about A.D. 100, if less generally than Greek in the eastern provinces. There was a distinct branch of Punic eloquence, and

[1] *Cf.* P. Monceaux, *Les Africains*, p. 42.

[2] Only thirty Punic inscriptions there are subsequent to the conquest.

old Carthaginian literature was studied. Even in the fourth century, when Greek and Syriac had ousted Punic from its home in Asia, we read of a Punic-speaking bishop being needed for Fussala, and, in a sermon to his own flock at Hippo, Augustine says: 'Latine vobis dicam, quia Punice non omnes nostis.' The same authority, referring to the rustics in his neighbourhood, remarks: 'Interrogati quid sint respondent Chanani.' However, Punic went out of use in the schools, sank to a patois, and was extinct by the era of the Arab conquest. The Africans were noted for *stridor Punicus*,[1] and, as Semitic languages were rich in sibilants, we may suppose that passages mentioning a peculiar pronunciation of Latin[2] denote undue sibilation. A few other characteristics of style, chiefly belonging to the Christian period, have parallels in Hebrew, but whether they arose through Punic influence or from the study of versions of the Hebrew scriptures is a matter of doubt.[3]

The Libyans were a tall blue-eyed race, with slight but powerful frames and fair hair, clearly closer akin to the Indo-European stock than either to the Bantu races to the south or to the Phœnicians.[4]

[1] Jerome, *Ep.* 97.

[2] *E.g.*, Spart. *Vit. Sev.* 15, 19.

[3] Three types of phrases are quoted: (*a*) Episcopus episcoporum (Tert.), nugæ nugarum (Aug.); (*b*) successionum vices (Cypr.), avaritia crudelitatis (Vict. Vit.), ævitas temporis (Arnob.); (*c*) unctus Dei (Cypr.).

[4] The confused tradition in Sall. *Jug.* 18 suggests that they were immigrants from Spain, and they lived chiefly in Numidia. The Moors to the west were of a darker race.

They were monogamous, their women had a high position, and their communities were usually based on republican principles. Individuals might, however, obtain an ascendancy, and unite several communities under a temporary kingship. They had considerable aptitude for agriculture, and under the guidance of Masinissa the resources of Numidia were greatly developed by their means. On the whole they shrank from town life, and, dwelling apart from the two civilized races, maintained unimpaired their language and alphabet, both probably of Aryan origin. To the native element in the population, according to Monceaux, we may attribute the strongly marked personality of the provincials, sometimes leading to obstinacy or violence, but associated with a love of independence and of the native land which impelled Africans to return thither however far they had wandered. Numerous Libyan inscriptions, often inscribed on *stelæ* of Punic fashion, occur in the country districts round Cirta and Hippo, and the language still holds its own against Arabic and French. The only influence which can be detected in African Latin is the confusion between *l* and *r* in certain place-names.[1]

However mixed their origin, the Africans possessed a national spirit more strongly developed than other provincial peoples. Their unpopularity at Rome encouraged them to accent their non-Italian elements, and to take a pride in calling themselves by

[1] *E.g.*, Milev is Μίρεον in Ptol. III. 28 ; an episcopal list gives *episcopus Arsacaritanus*, referring to the town Arsacal.

the names of the barbarian tribes on the outskirts of the Roman dominions.[1]

The kinds of literature most in vogue were declamations, short popular philosophical treatises, occasional poems on rural subjects or hunting, slight mythological poems, and, later, religious polemical writings. History was little regarded. But one pagan historian is claimed for Africa, and he hardly reaches the second rank.[2] The *Principia Historiæ* of Fronto, and other slight historical attempts, show that the Africans had not much genius for narrative-writing. They are rhetorical and tedious, while for calling up a succession of brilliant but disconnected pictures their wealth of vocabulary and vivid imagination were eminently fitted.

As regards the language, further considerations are reserved for Chapter X.; but it may here be noted that two special features mark it off from the contemporary language of Italy—the wealth of archaism and the literary use of vulgar forms of speech. The provincials of Italian descent inherited the speech brought over by Cæsar's veterans, the ordinary camp dialect which became the parent of present-day Romance tongues. Its constructions were simple, its inflexions fluctuating; its powers of

[1] *E.g.*, Front. *Ep. Gr.* I.; Apul. *Apol.*, p. 32 (ed. v. der Vliet); *cf.* Flor. *Verg. Orat.*; Stat. *Silv.* IV. 5; Spart. *Vit. Sev.* 13; Plut. *Reip. Ger. Præc.* III.

[2] This rests on the identification (for which *cf.* Wölfflin in *Archiv für Lat. Lex.* VI. 1) of Florus the historian, and the writer of the treatise on Vergil, who was certainly an African.

innovation, as exemplified by the formation of compounds, derivatives, or diminutives, far surpassed the steadily crystallizing classical idiom. It maintained old-fashioned phrases which we may search for in vain in the centuries between Plautus and Apuleius or Tertullian, but which had never fallen out of common speech. On such a dialect the Augustan and Silver Ages had little influence. A literary revival is a return to the purity of speech which prevailed in the time of Ennius; even Cicero marks the beginning of a decline. Seneca is the originator of all that should be avoided.

We see, therefore, a people partly Italian, partly Asiatic by descent, placed in a semi-tropical climate, ruled by Roman law, but with national feelings of their own. Roman *gravitas* and the warlike spirit are gone; in ordinary life external splendour and diversions of every kind are sought for, in dress richness and bright colours, in literature versatility and display.

CHAPTER II

THE THREE CAPITALS: CARTHAGE, CIRTA, AND CÆSAREA

'Hæc igitur recidiva viget post busta resurgens
Phœnicis in morem.'—DRACONTIUS, V. 115.

LITTLE more than twenty years from the conquest had elapsed, when an attempt was made to resettle the devoted site of the Punic capital. The new city of Junonia, named from the former protectress of Carthage, who had been identified by the Romans with Juno, was in 122 B.C. colonized by 6,000 Italians under the direction of C. Gracchus,[1] apparently slightly to the north of the former city, in the suburb known to the Arabs as El Mersa. Evil omens attended this foundation. The first standard was broken down by the wind, sacrifices were blown away from the altars, wolves tore up the new boundary mark; and on the triumph of the oligarchy at Rome the legal existence of the colony as a *respublica* ceased.[2] The settlers could not, however, be removed, but they were joined by others, both

[1] *Cf.* Plut. *C. Gracch.* 11; App. *B.C.* I. 24; Eutrop. IV. 19.

[2] For the legal position of the colonists and their lands, *cf.* Mommsen in *C. I. L.* I., pp. 96-106

Libyan and Phœnician, from neighbouring towns. The seat of Roman government was now away at Utica, and strong traces of Punic influence reasserted themselves in Carthage; grim Semitic cults revived, the temples on the Byrsa were rebuilt, and offers of assistance made to the enemies of Rome.[1] Coins of this age[2] bear the names of *suffetes* (the Hebrew 'judges'), magistrates not replaced by *duoviri* for nearly a century. There are few references to Carthage during the remainder of the republican period, and it must have been far from prosperous when Marius took refuge among its ruined walls,[3] never rebuilt till the era of Theodosius, or when Cæsar, encamping near the ancient site, had the mournful vision of a great army weeping over the desolation of their city.[4]

Cæsar's design of recolonizing Carthage was apparently not executed in the dictator's lifetime.[5] A first restoration was attempted in 35 B.C. by Statilius Taurus, and on the devastation of the city and expulsion of many of the settlers by Lepidus a second party of colonists was sent out by Augustus, who wished to show that Rome bore no grudge against her ancient rival; and the remainder of the community were recruited from the neighbourhood. About 16 B.C., through the care of Sentius Saturninus, Carthage became definitely a colony, receiving the

[1] Athen. V. 50.
[2] Müller, *Numism. de l'anc. Afrique*, II. 149-151.
[3] Plut. *Mar.* 40. [4] App. *Pun.* 136.
[5] Tert. *De Pall.*: 'post longas Cæsaris moras.'

franchise and becoming the headquarters of the Proconsul of Africa.

The inhabitants were a pleasure-loving yet industrious race. Keen lovers of beauty of every kind, they were devoted to magnificent buildings, rich mosaics, statues, paintings, music, and oratorical or theatrical displays. In dress effeminacy and luxury prevailed. The toga, adopted after the Italian settlement, was again discarded, and Tertullian[1] vainly declaims against the 'storied folds' and spreading trains of the pallium worn by the *discincti Afri*[2] of his day. Later, according to Salvian, men showed themselves openly in women's costume. The richness of female apparel, in which much of the gorgeousness of an Oriental capital was displayed, furnished still more material for the moralists' warning. A special treatise of Cyprian denounces the garments of coloured wool, the necklets of mixed jewels and gold, ear-rings, dyed or false (preferably 'flame-coloured') hair, the cosmetics, armlets and anklets, with which even Christian converts could not bring themselves to dispense.[3] A special manufactory of such adornments (*gynæceum*) existed at Carthage in the period of the *Notitia*.

Class distinctions were at first less strongly marked than at Rome, but in time wealth came to be concentrated in fewer hands, and the rich, apparently called 'the men of the mount,' from the

[1] *De Pall.* ad init. [2] Verg. *Æn.* VIII. 724.

[3] Cypr. *De Laps.* 30; *cf.* id., *De Hab. Virg.*; Commod. *Instr.* II. 18, 5-8.

congregation of the finest houses on the Byrsa, became harsh and oppressive. Carthage enjoyed freedom from foreign and civil wars, had a moderate government not enforced by military violence, and was favoured by many emperors. The great amount of trade, especially in corn, olives, minerals, such as lead from the valley of the Bagradas, iron, and marble; in slaves from the interior, purple dyes, rich woods from the Atlas Mountains, woollen stuffs, and leather—all this led to the amassing of great fortunes. While during its earlier years Roman Carthage developed slowly, authors of the second and subsequent centuries constantly refer to its opulence and prosperity, placing it second only to Rome, which the Africans spoke of as *Soror Civitas*.[1] Besides merchants there were large bodies of engineers, mechanics, sculptors, architects, etc. Lawyers and rhetoricians were numerous, and the various religious worships and superstitions gave employment to hosts of priests, augurs, and diviners. In spite of this wealth and activity, poverty was widespread and grinding, nor was any organized attempt made to relieve the sufferings of the poor until Christianity had been firmly established.[2] Salvian,[3] in his lurid picture of the wickedness of African society in the last years before the Vandal conquest, dwells on the inhumanity of the age, the spoliation of orphans,

[1] Tert. *Pall.* I.; *cf.* Ptol. IV. 37; Herodian VII. 61; Salv. *Gub. D.* VI. 14,816; Mart. Cap. VI. 669*c*.

[2] Pont. *Vit. Cypr.* (ed. Hartel) II.; Optat. III. 3.

[3] *Gub. D.* VI. 16.

oppression of widows, and crucifixions of the poor, cruelties which drove many of the lower orders to join the ranks of the barbarian invaders. The absence of long-standing tradition caused the client bond to break sooner than at Rome; and, as in Italy long before, the growth of grazing land and the concentration of property in the hands of a few forced small farmers and labourers into the lower quarters of the city.

Carthage formed an irregular isosceles triangle between the sea and an unhealthy lagoon. At the centre was the Byrsa or Acropolis,[1] a plateau on which were congregated the chief public buildings, the Prætorium, Curia, Basilicæ, and several temples. The temple of Æsculapius contained a public library and record office. There were also many private houses. By the inner harbour was the lesser Byrsa, parallel to, and north-east of, the greater, and on it the vast temple of Cælestis is thought to have stood. The harbour had two regular basins—an outer, Mandracium,[2] for commerce, and an inner, the Cothon, for war-vessels, containing an island on which were dockyards. A passage of Appian[3] suggests that the Punic agora or forum was near the latter harbour, but it cannot be proved that the Roman forum occupied the same place, which may have been the site of the maritime forum, the *Platea Maritima* of Augustine.[4] The streets were narrow

[1] App. *Pun.* 1.
[2] Procop. *B. Vand.* I. 20.
[3] *Pun.* 91-2.
[4] Procop. *Æd.* VI.; Aug. *Conf.* II. 58.

and lined with houses six or seven stories high, and, in view of the heat, often carried some distance below the level of the ground. The finest road was that of the money changers, *Vicus Argentarius*, called by the geographer a 'præcipuum opus publicum';[1] another, *Platea Nova*, partly occupied by a flight of steps, may have led to the Byrsa. Others were named from temples, as Vicus Saturni, Via Veneria.[2] Streets were often planted with rows of olive-trees, and some groves in the city were used for worship according to the old Phœnician custom. The suburbs were taken up with splendid *horti*, the parks of the richer citizens, and across these, west of the city, a magnificent aqueduct, the largest in the world, brought water direct from the mountains of the interior.[3]

The better houses and public buildings were constructed of African marble, the dwellings of the poorer classes of tufa coated with pitch, whence Pliny remarks[4] that, contrary to the usual custom, the Carthaginians used pitch for their houses and chalk for their wine. Similar calcareous tufa was employed for the rebuilding of the walls by Theodosius.

A stadium,[5] a palæstra,[6] and gymnasia,[7] existed,

[1] *Exposit. Tot. Mund.* *Cf.* Aug. *Conf.* VI. 9.

[2] *Cf. Act. Cypr.* II.

[3] *Cf.* illustration in Playfair, *Travels in the Footsteps of Bruce*, p. 130.

[4] *N. H.*, 36, 48.

[5] Tert. *De Spect.*, III., *Scorp.* VI. [6] Apul. *Flor.* 18.

[7] Tert. *De Spect.* III.; Pamelius *Vit. Tert.* 204.

but the enervated disposition of the inhabitants made them unpopular, and even in the time of Tertullian, the first was almost disused. On the contrary the amphitheatre and circus were universal objects of interest until far into the Christian period. The ruins of both are little more than shallow troughs, but medieval travellers have left fairly complete descriptions of them. According to the Arabs El Behri and Edrisi, the amphitheatre consisted of a circle of fifty arches, each thirty spans broad, on columns, and surmounted by five similar stories. On the surface of the stone were carved figures of animals, handicraftsmen, and the winds in human form. Marble animals stood over each door, and above every arch in the upper arcades was a polished cartouche. Here gladiatorial contests took place, and prisoners were given up to wild beasts. While the memory of human sacrifices lingered, something of a religious character attached to these executions, and male victims were sometimes arrayed in robes appropriated to the ministers of Molech-Saturn, women in those of the priestesses of Ceres.[1] The gladiatorial shows were characterized by great depravity; tickets were bought for large sums, and persons would flock in from the country to see their relations fight.[2] As at Rome the gates were Libitinensis and Sanavivaria,[3] from the former of which dead gladiators were carried out in a procession headed by a figure representing

[1] *Act. Perpet.* XVIII. [2] *Cf.* Cypr. *Ad Donat.* VII.
[3] *Act. Perpet.* X.; Tert. *Apol.* 15.

the God of Death, armed with a hammer. These contests formed part of the Pythian and Æsculapian games which were introduced in the second century, and, though suppressed for a time after the conversion of the empire, were revived by Gratian in 376.[1] It appears that in the later period a special tax for such *munera* was levied on the wealthy citizens, and they were under the management of a special official, the *tribunus voluptatum*, who was directly responsible to the emperor.

The circus, about quarter of a mile south-east of the amphitheatre, measured more than a third of a mile by 130 yards; its *spina* still stands, without casing. El Behri perhaps refers to the circus in his account of the Koumech, a building of several stories, having fluted columns of marble white as crystal, so large that twelve men could sit at table on one of them.[2] The stables adjoining the circus, with their elaborate painting of Fame, and the horses' drinking-fountain, were also richly adorned.[3] Thermæ were built or rebuilt by M. Aurelius, others by Maximian; and in the centre of the city were the Thermæ Gargilianæ, a cool, spacious building, large enough, according to Augustine, to be used for important conferences and recitations.[4] Other baths were added by the Vandal kings, such as the Parvæ Baiæ of Thrasamund, which had white marble columns ornamented with shells, and supplied both hot and cold water. Lastly come the Thermæ Theodosianæ, erected by Justinian after the

[1] *Cod. Theod.* XV. 7, 3.
[2] P. 106, trad. de Slane.
[3] Luxorius 466, 474.
[4] *Cf.* Dracont. *Controv.* ad fin.

reconquest of Africa. There were also fashionable hot springs in the neighbourhood, some of which had curative properties;[1] and that of Carpi, a colony of Hippo, of which Pliny[2] tells the story of the tame dolphins, attracted idlers from the whole district.

The Prætorium, or official residence of the governor, lay on a slope, probably the eastern slope, of the Byrsa, and not far from the forum.[3] Portions of this building, afterwards the palace of the Vandal kings, have been excavated, and consist of seven parallel halls, with vaulting and floor of mosaics set in white marble. The proconsul held office for one year, and received a salary of a million sesterces. Africa being a peaceful province, he was not required to have had much military experience, but was often some distinguished jurisconsult or orator who, when not on circuit, would act as the head of society and patron of literature. Such were Claudius Maximus the Stoic, who tried Apuleius for witchcraft; Javolenus Priscus, a celebrated lawyer; Lollianus and Gordian, both orators; Pertinax, future emperor, and once a teacher of literature; and Symmachus, orator and letter-writer. Under the proconsul stood a body of legal assessors, probably nominated by himself; and the whole hierarchy of officials, down to the surveyors of roads and squares, was carefully organized as the empire advanced, the degree of reverence to be paid to each being accurately laid down.[4]

[1] Apul. *Flor.* XVI.
[2] *Ep.* IX. 33.
[3] *Cf.* Vict. Vit., p. 104.
[4] *Cf.* Salv. *Gub. D.* VI. 16.

The Three Capitals

The old Numidian capital of Cirta lay about fifty Roman miles from the Mediterranean, on a pedestal of rock a thousand feet above sea-level. The River Ampsaga, passing through deep precipitous gorges, surrounds it except at one point, and on the north-west is a lofty range of hills. Although the name was of Punic origin, akin to that of Carthage, and there was a Punic element in the population, it first appears in history as the capital of the Numidian Massylii under Syphax,[1] Masinissa, and his successors. Micipsa, who was specially allotted Cirta by Scipio Minor, greatly strengthened the fortifications,[2] and increased the military resources of the district to 30,000 men, one-third cavalry. He also planted there a body of Greek settlers from the Cyrenaic region,[3] and we recognize their influence in certain Greek inscriptions, and in the attempt to connect the origin of the city and of the Numidian royal family with the general body of Greek legend.[4] On Micipsa's death, the elder son, Adherbal, obtained the sovereignty over this part of Numidia, and during this period we first hear of a number of Italian settlers,[5] chiefly merchants with their families and servants. After Cirta was surrendered to Jugurtha, a massacre took place both of the Numidian inhabitants and of these *negotiatores*.[6] In the course of the Jugurthine war we find Cirta occupied by Metellus,[7] who placed there his captives

[1] Liv. XXX. 12; App. *Pun.* 27.
[2] App. *Pun.* 106; Strab. XVII. 3. *Cf.* Sall. *Jug.* 23.
[3] Strab. l.c. [4] Apollod. II. 7, 8. [5] Sall. *Jug.* 21, 36.
[6] *Ibid.* 26; Liv. *Ep.* 64. [7] Sall. *Jug.* 81-2.

and baggage, and near by Marius won his victory.[1] It again became the capital of the client kings Hiempsal and Juba,[2] and in the latter's reign a prince of the blood, Masinissa, was in command of the town, and allied himself with the Pompeian faction. In 64 B.C. a partisan of Catiline, P. Sittius of Nuceria, left Rome for Spain and Africa in the hope of collecting sufficient forces to assist Piso and strengthen the rebel cause in those provinces.[3] Piso was soon murdered by the oppressed Spaniards, and Sittius, having incurred a sentence of exile, took service, with a band of Italian and Spanish mercenaries, under the Moorish King Bocchus,[4] whom he is conjectured to have aided in the reorganization of his naval and military forces. On the outbreak of the great civil war Bocchus embraced the Cæsarean cause, and Sittius, acting as his lieutenant, captured Cirta from the rival faction of Juba and Pompey. In reward Cæsar granted him the town and district on peculiar conditions.[5] It became a *colonia* directly dependent on Rome, though locally situated in the kingdom of Iol, most of which was later merged in the province of Cæsariensis. No separate *lex colonica* was required, as Cæsar had procured an agrarian law under which the foundation was to be carried out by one of his legates. Sittius thus, besides becoming the first curator of the colony, had wide powers as *legatus pro prætore*. He lived to

[1] Sall. *Jug.* 88. [2] App. *B.C.* IV. 54.
[3] Sall. *Cat.* 21; Cic. *Pro Sull.* 20, 56.
[4] App. l.c.; Dio. C. 43, 3.
[5] *Cf.* Mommsen in *Hermes*, vol. i.

divide the land among his men, but fell in the subsequent war, during which Arabio, son of the expelled Masinissa, temporarily recovered his capital, and the city suffered heavily. Under Augustus Cirta was probably organized according to Cæsar's intention, and placed under *duoviri*, being recruited with fresh settlers from Italy. In its territory were several *pagi*, at first mere dependencies, but before long the emperor (perhaps Augustus himself) allowed bodies of *decuriones* to be established in a few of the largest, which became colonies.[1] Yet Cæsar's grant to the Sittians was not abrogated. The whole territory was established as a federation or *respublica*, governed by the Ordo of Cirta, to which, however, delegates were sent from the *curiæ* of the other colonies, and even from the larger *pagi*.[2] The *duoviri*, who here only enjoyed the right, appointed *præfecti iuri dicundo* to administer the chief dependencies. Towards the end of the first century, in view of the increasing duties, the duumvirate was changed to a triumvirate, a unique office in a colony.[3] It was annual, the holders being ex-ædiles chosen by the popular assembly, and acting every fifth year as censors with the title of Quinquennales. One of the three apparently resided at the largest dependency, Rusicade —'the headland of fire'—and was called Prefect, while the others visited the lesser places to hear civil

[1] Rusicade (Philippeville) on the coast, Milev (Milah), Chullu (Collo), Cuicul (Djemila).

[2] *Recueil de Const.*, 26.

[3] *C. I. L.* VIII. 4,191, 6,710; Fronto, p. 200 (ed. Naber).

suits, control finances, and supervise the local magistrates. All were in theory subject at first to the proconsul, later to the Numidian legate, but the district long maintained a semi-independent position, analogous to that of a client kingdom; and it was only as a result of military exigencies that in the third century the whole group was placed under the ordinary provincial system. Through this period Cirta, though troubled by Moorish and Frankish incursions, increased in wealth and importance, but the civil conflicts at the beginning of the fourth century resulted in the destruction of the greater part of the town.[1] Reorganization and rebuilding were carried out by order of Constantine the Great; Cirta received the name of that emperor, which it still bears, and was soon covered with gorgeous buildings, in a debased style indeed, but rich with marbles and mosaics, and, as in the case of the largest viaduct, sometimes showing great engineering skill.

In spite of religious disputes, mostly originating in the Donatist schism, which took its rise here, Cirta remained prosperous for some centuries longer. Protected by its isolation and by the anti-Catholic tendencies of its bishops, it was left in semi-independence during the Vandal rule, and under the Greek empire still formed an important religious and administrative centre.

The two periods of greatest architectural activity were the second and fourth centuries, but all considerable remains belong to the latter. To the north

[1] Sext. Vict. *Cæs.* 41, 28.

was the large square of the capitol, with a triumphal arch and five temples, the finest, perhaps, that of Jupiter Victor.[1] Adjoining was a splendid *nymphæum*, a kind of museum and resting-place for the citizens. Two amphitheatres existed, several baths and thermæ, and a theatre, which has now disappeared, but was compared by Edrisi, an Arab traveller of the thirteenth century, to that of Taormina.

Five bridges spanned the almost encircling river, of which that to the south-east, with two tiers of richly adorned arcades resting on natural arches, must have been one of the most remarkable in the whole empire. Constructed in 335, it fell in 1857, and is now known from the account of the Arab El Behri, and from pictures in the works of Playfair[2] and Delamare.[3] Another richly adorned structure was the triumphal arch called by the Arabs Fortress of the Ghoul, probably leading to the hippodrome; and many of the tombs are distinguished by frescoes and mosaics.

The district to the north, *Regio Azimaciana*, at one time largely in the possession of some of the numerous Sittii, abounded in hot springs, and vegetation here was most luxuriant, oranges and pomegranates ripening under the shade of palm-trees. The harvests round Cirta were so abundant that labourers would flock in from the far east of

[1] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 6981.
[2] *Travels in the Footsteps of Bruce*, p. 48.
[3] *Expl. Scient. de l'Algérie*, pl. 113.

the proconsular province;[1] nor were other kinds of wealth lacking. Pure white marble was dug, and there were several copper-mines, some used as prisons for Christians during the persecutions.[2] Guinea-fowl, *Numidicæ*, a favourite delicacy under the empire, came chiefly from this part, and a special functionary supplied from the district wild beasts for the amphitheatre at Rome.[3]

Trade with the interior was conducted chiefly by means of native caravans, and in the streets of Cirta might be seen parties of wild Pharusians who had crossed the salt marshes with skins of fresh water tied under their horses.[4] This tribe included the Troglodytes, and was famous for its bows and scythed chariots.

Several natives of the town attained to high positions. Fronto was the most distinguished, but his letters refer to many other Cirtenses, including his own son-in-law, Aufidius Victorinus, noted for his eloquence, who were members of the senate or otherwise distinguished at Rome.[5] Cæcilius Natalis, triumvir of Cirta in 210, is probably the Cæcilius

[1] *Eph. Epigr.* V. 279: 'Falcifera cum turba virum processerat arvis Seu Cirtæ nomados, seu Jovis arva petens.'

[2] Cypr. *Ep.* 76, 2.

[3] *C. I. L.* VIII. 7039.

[4] Strab. XVII. 37.

[5] *Cf.* Fronto, p. 200; also *C. I. L.* VIII. 7059, the jurisconsult Clemens; *ibid.*, 7044, Flavius Postumus, prætor and *legatus legionis*; *ibid.*, 12,152, epitaph on a native of Cirta who at the age of twenty-two was a renowned orator and master both of Greek and Latin.

who takes part in the dialogue *Octavius* of Minucius Felix.[1]

Other settlers who had formed part of the army of Sittius established themselves some distance to the east, at Sicca Veneria, on the borders of the proconsular province. Inscriptions here refer to a colony from Cirta, and the name Nova Cirta was sometimes applied to it,[2] but we do not hear of any political connection with the Numidian capital. It was a centre of the worship of Venus, with a body of priests called Venerii, and later had an important Christian community with a large basilica. Among the natives of Sicca were Eutychius Proculus, a learned grammarian and instructor of M. Aurelius; Arnobius, the Christian apologist; and Cælius Aurelianus, of whom some medical treatises are extant.

The third capital, Cæsarea-Iol (corrupted by the Arabs to *Z*erschell), had been a small Phœnician trading-station with a good harbour protected by an island, lying at the foot of the northern range of mountains in Eastern Mauritania, and in the neighbourhood of much rich wooded country.

When the son of that King Juba of Numidia who had sided with Pompey in the civil war was released from captivity at Rome by Augustus, he at first received a portion of his father's dominions, but soon was, by a new arrangement, transferred to Mauritania, and chose for his residence the town of

[1] *Cf.* Dessau in *Hermes* XV., 471 *et seq.*

[2] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 1641, Siccenses Cirthenses.

Iol, which he renamed Cæsarea, in honour of his patron. The tastes of Juba were those of a littérateur and protector of art rather than of an African king. Himself married to a daughter of the last Macedonian queen of Egypt, he made his court a centre of Greek influence, and produced books on the history of Rome and of Arabia, on geography, the drama, music, etc.—probably mere compilations, but much praised by contemporaries. This client kingdom came to an end under Caligula, with the deposition of Ptolemy, son of Juba. In the reorganization of Africa by Claudius, Cæsarea became a colony attached to the Quirine tribe, and the residence of the procurator of the new province Cæsariensis. Little is known about its history before the coming of the Vandals. It had the usual colonial officials: *duoviri* (called *quinquennales* in the census years), ædiles, a curator, and several religious corporations, such as flamens, pontifices, and *dendrophori*. The *concilium provinciæ*, which regulated official worships, also met here.[1] Public games, *Severia* and *Commodia*, were established towards the end of the second century, when Cæsarea was the station of a war-fleet designed to check Moorish inroads on Spain. A strong wall, nearly two miles long and forty feet high, with buttresses, ran along by the sea, and there was an amphitheatre, in part of marble; a hippodrome with portico; and thermæ with façade more than 300 feet long, adorned with statues, and having a frigidarium paved with slabs

[1] *Ann. Epigr.* V., 1902.

of onyx; besides other baths. Eighteen arches remain of the aqueduct which brought water from the interior; this had a triple tier of arches, and was over 100 feet high. There are allusions in inscriptions to bodies of Greek actors, and to makers of rich furniture, but the period of the finest art seems to have been before the Roman occupation, and of this many relics are preserved, partly in the town, partly in museums at Algiers or Paris. The finest monument is the royal mausoleum[1] of the early years of the first century A.D., east of the town, with Ionic columns and bronze ornamentation stone lions adorn the inner door, and within are sepulchral chambers of an Egyptian type. Numbers of statues and other fragments remain, of fine Greek art, but of local stone, indicating the hospitality shown by Juba to Greek artificers. Among the former, a faun of marble with a panther at his feet, and a headless goddess, probably Artemis, deserve mention;[2] and Corinthian and Ionic capitals, friezes, and mouldings, have often been discovered.

The Church of Cæsarea ranked high in the third and fourth centuries; the bishop was a metropolitan, and in the cathedral Augustine disputed against the Donatist leader. After being burnt and plundered by the Moors under Firmus, Cæsarea was restored by Theodosius, only to be again almost destroyed by the Vandals, who, however, left the possession of the ruined city to the natives. It was recovered

[1] Illustrated in Graham's *Roman Africa*, p. 28.

[2] Cf. *Gazette Archéologique*, 1886, pl. 7.

for the empire by Belisarius, and was the seat of a military dux; and another era of importance opened with the later Middle Ages, especially in the time of Barbarossa, the pirate King of Algiers. An earthquake reduced it to ruins in 1738.

Among the natives were the Emperor Macrinus, and Priscian, a celebrated grammarian of the fifth century, who resided chiefly at Constantinople.

CHAPTER III

LEARNING AND EDUCATION

'En Afrique chacun écrit à sa manière et selon ses goûts. Ils sont en général moins soucieux d'élégance et de tenue, plus dégagés des règles, plus personnels, et s'abandonnent davantage à leur génie propre.'—BOISSIER.

EDUCATION was widely diffused through the African provinces, even if somewhat superficial and frivolous. Handbooks and abridgments were much used,[1] and acrostics or centos, chiefly Vergilian, were favourite subjects for school exercises.[2] While no great encouragement was given to learning by the imperial government, local enterprise was seldom lacking, so that small towns like Madaura could supply adequate teaching for a young Apuleius or Augustine who wished to prepare for the central university of Carthage. This education was accessible to persons of humble rank, like Tertullian, the centurion's son, who readily obtained the right of pleading in the Carthaginian law-courts.

[1] *E.g.*, the arguments of Vergil's books by Sulpicius Apollinaris, an epitome of Sallust by Exuperantius, the distichs of Cato, and the Carthaginian anthology (Bährens, *Poet. Lat. Min.* IV.), including extracts from classical and native authors.

[2] Tert. *De Præsc. Hær.* 39.

Schoolmasters wore a distinctive dress,[1] and often taught in booths adjoining the forum, which were covered outside by curtains,[2] under porticoes, or on the upper floors of private houses, whence it probably comes that no remains of scholastic buildings are to be found among the ruins of African towns. They were paid a regular salary by the local authorities, and besides received fees from parents. Students might be sent from villages to the schools of a neighbouring town,[3] but even in villages *primi magistri* could often be found, who gave instruction in reading, writing, and calculation.

The study of Vergil was one of the earliest imposed by *grammatici*, or masters of the more advanced schools, and pupils might be required to repeat in prose the substance of one of his speeches. Masters were accused of harshness and cruelty;[4] they were ever, says Augustine, on the watch for barbarisms, and, though visiting with severe punishment any misplacement of the letter *h*, would commend a showy and well-expressed recital of ill deeds.[5] At some schools stenography, both Latin and Greek, was taught, a valuable acquisition for those who wished to enter the profession of clerk or secretary.[6] We also hear of lessons in painting, and of singing used to diversify the ordinary routine of recitation and grammar.[7]

[1] 'Pænulati magistri,' Aug. *Conf.* II. 15.
[2] *Ibid.* I. 13.
[3] Aug. *Conf.* II. 3.
[4] *Ibid.* I. 14. *Cf.* Luxorius, 448, *In Grammaticum Furiosum.*
[5] Aug. *Conf.* I. 17.
[6] *C. I. L.* VIII. 724.
[7] Aug. *Conf.* III. 6.

Young men who wished to embark on a course of legal study, on leaving these schools, generally about the age of seventeen, proceeded to Carthage, where teachers both of rhetoric and jurisprudence had set up their lecture-rooms from an early date.[1] Such youths became *juris studiosi* or *studentes;*[2] but they were under no control or discipline, and the vices of the capital had a corrupting influence on their character. Bands of disorderly students, *eversores*, would sweep the streets, and it was a favourite amusement to break into the lecture-room of a professor and disperse his class.[3]

Numbers of travelling lecturers on semi-philosophical themes drew their auditors from among these students. The more ambitious youths would also enter for some of the many literary contests held in the city. Those in poetry lasted to a late period, and were very popular. They were held in the theatre, and wreaths of dried grass were placed on the victors' heads by the Proconsul of Africa. A regular class of *haruspices* existed, who by making offerings to 'demons' could procure victory for such candidates as cared to pay for their services.[4]

The expense of such an education was great,[5] but it was readily borne by parents, who knew that a capable pleader was sure of constant employment.

[1] Apul. *Flor.* XIX. *Cf.* Florentinus 32.

[2] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 2470; *Eph. Epigr.* V. 191 (a Libyan native student).

[3] Aug. *Conf.* III. 3; *Ep.* 185. *Cf.* Apul. *Met.* II. 17.

[4] Aug. *Conf.* IV. 2. *Cf.* also Vop. *Numer.* XI.

[5] *C. I. L.* VIII. 5370.

Many students, like Apuleius, finished their studies by a sojourn at Athens or Rome, and we have preserved a regulation of the Emperor Valentinian threatening with deportation the dissolute Africans who spent most of their time at public spectacles or in prolonged carousals at Rome.[1]

Precocity was a marked feature of African education. We may read in inscriptions of boys of fourteen or fifteen composing dialogues, idylls, and letters, improvising on given subjects, and drawing crowds to their declamations.[2] The future emperor Severus declaimed in public at seventeen.[3]

From early in the empire the Africans devoted themselves to the pursuit of oratory, both forensic and declamatory. Paid professors of rhetoric existed among them as in other provinces.[4] From the time of Juvenal,[5] Africa was 'the nurse of pleaders'; Cornutus,t he philosopher and grammarian, wrote oratorical handbooks both in Greek and Latin under Nero. Statius in the *Silvæ*[6] praises the 'vox habilis foro' and 'non venale eloquium' of Septimius Severus from Leptis, also the birthplace of Julianus Salvianus, the greatest lawyer of his age, who drew up for Hadrian a permanent code of law which remained an authority for two centuries. Fronto and Cælianus[7] were employed

[1] *Cod. Theod.* XIV. 9, 1.
[2] *E.g., C. I. L.* VIII. 5530.
[3] Spart. *Vit. Sev.* I.
[4] *E.g.*, Inscr. Henzen 6931, on a *centenaria procuratio* in the Hadrumetine region.
[5] VII. 148.
[6] IV. 5, 49. *Codd.* 'hilaris'; *Markl.* 'habilis.'
[7] Lamprid. *Vit. Diadum.* 8.

to instruct in their art the contemporary heirs to the empire, and four of the great African Christian teachers had once kept *scholæ rhetoricæ.*

The corrupt state of the judicature in most provinces would suggest that earnest argument or careful reasoning would meet with little success, and that sarcasm, adulation and display, exerted greater influence. Accordingly, the only specimen of African legal eloquence which remains, the *De Magia* of Apuleius, is long and disjointed, crammed with ill-digested learning, and indicates to what a degree forensic oratory had been influenced by the taste for showy rhetoric, poetical quotations, anecdotes, and popular philosophical disquisitions. No serious attempt is made to refute most of the charges; they are rather taken as texts for self-laudation and for blackening the characters of the prosecutors.

This widespread devotion to jurisprudence had some influence on the language of the time, in which legal parodies are frequent.[1] Further, Tertullian and other converted rhetoricians helped to mould Western theology into a legal form strongly contrasting with the metaphysical leanings of the Greek Church. Speculative questions such as those which underlay the heresies of Nestorius or the Monophysites were little regarded by the Christians of Africa. What were man's rights and duties with

[1] Several examples occur in Apuleius (*e.g., Met.* VI. 23, IX. 27). Tertullian refers to a mime *Jovis Mortui Testamentum* as popular at Carthage, perhaps of the same class as the extant testament of Grunnius Porcellus.

regard to God; should converted heretics be re-baptized; should believers who had lapsed under persecution be readmitted to communion; could a believer take the oath of allegiance to the emperor? Such semi-legal questions were passionately discussed throughout the provinces.

Recitations, which the satire of Roman writers had made less popular in Europe, attracted large audiences in Africa through the second century. They were usually oratorical rather than poetical, and the careful workmanship and refinement[1] which characterize them show that orators had at last realized how subordinate the matter of oratory must henceforth be to the mode of expression. Some idea of the nature of these lectures may be derived from the *Florida*, or selections from public speeches delivered by Apuleius at Carthage. They are not calculated to make great demands on the intellectual powers of his hearers. Short anecdotes, stories of strange men and beasts, elaborate similes, or eulogies of provincial governors, would serve to amuse the dilettanti, and give scope for the exercise of their keen critical faculties.[2]

The travelling lecturer or sophist was a well-known figure by the age of Lucian and Apuleius, and there are references to his continued existence in the *Confessions* of Augustine. With a very small retinue of slaves he would pass from one to another of the towns of Northern Africa, receiving hospitality at

[1] *Cf.* Fronto, p. 65.
[2] *Flor.* IX.

the house of some admirer in the places where he stopped to speak, and seizing any opportunity of increasing his collection of natural curiosities, of gaining acquaintance with fresh religious mysteries, or of enlarging in any way his stock-in-trade as an adept in every branch of human knowledge.

The writing of history was little regarded till the Christian period, when, having been converted into a branch of polemics, it formed the subject of some declamatory works, not indeed without value, but displaying little conception of the true functions of a historian. Such were the history of Optatus of Milev, near Cirta, in opposition to the Donatists, and an account of the Vandal persecutions by Victor Vitensis. A number of grammarians and critics appear, but at a comparatively late date, and their works, being usually compilations from earlier non-African writings, have little local interest. Among others are Nonius Marcellus of Thubursicum in Numidia, noteworthy for the many early quotations which he preserves, and Victorinus, the author of Ciceronian commentaries and works on rhetoric and metre. Both belonged to the fourth century. Augustine wrote treatises on grammar, music, logic, and rhetoric, designed to form parts of a cyclopædia. Some technical works also remain, such as the poetical treatise on metres by Terentianus Maurus, medical writings by Cælius Aurelianus, a representative of the 'methodic' school of Soranus, and the horticultural works of Gargilius Martialis, a native of Mauritania.

Public libraries existed in several towns, usually founded by private benefactors. That at Thamugadi is well preserved.[1] It was approached by a colonnaded court, and consisted of a large semicircular hall with rectangular niches to receive the rolls, reached from a platform, and having a gallery above for further rows of shelves.

The study of Greek in Africa underwent curious fluctuations. In the closing years of the republic, Greek was encouraged by the native kings, a Greek colony settled at Cirta, and the nearness of Hellenic settlements in Cyrenaica, Spain, and Gaul, combined with the overthrow of the Phœnicians, who had long barred their advance, led to an influx of Greeks. The capital of the Greek author and king Juba was for a time the Hellenizing centre, and Greek came to be generally understood by the upper and commercial classes. From the beginning of the second century to the reconquest of Africa by Belisarius it was losing ground. Settlers were frequently ignorant veterans, untouched by Hellenic culture; children even of wealthier parents were cared for, not by Greek pedagogues, but by black slaves from the interior, and the specially Greek pursuits of philosophy and poetry appealed little to the legal and rhetorical mind of the African. Further, African products were exported chiefly to Italy, and little trade was done with the East.

Thus African literature came to owe little to Greek canons. The language was indeed taught by

[1] *Cf.* H. Stuart Jones, *Comp. to Rom. Hist.*, p. 140.

grammatici in the secondary schools, and was generally understood by literary men up to the age of Severus; but within the next century and a half it had come to be one of the most unpopular subjects. Pupils would complain that the difficulty of acquiring a foreign tongue 'drenched with gall all the sweetness of Greek legend,'[1] and a thorough knowledge of the language was seldom gained except through residence in Italy or the East. The popularity of the theatre at Carthage has sometimes been adduced as an argument in favour of a wider knowledge of Greek than is here suggested. Actors and dancers were frequently of Greek origin,[2] and the favourite themes alluded to by Tertullian,[3] such as the fate of Phaethon, Cybele's love for Attis, the judgment of Paris, or lyrical treatments of Jupiter's adventures, seem to have been presented by means of selections from the Greek tragedians. Apuleius also assumes in his audience a knowledge of Philemon and Menander.[4] In some cases, however, a Latin translation was used;[5] in others an interpreter explained the bearing of the play to the audience before the performance began,[6] others were acted mainly in dumb show, for the pantomime was throughout exceedingly popular at Carthage; and more attention was paid to the

[1] Aug. *Conf.* I. 13, 14. *Cf.* Terent. Maur. 1971.

[2] *Cf. C. I. L.* 12,925, on the female dancer Thyas, who died at the age of fourteen.

[3] *Apol.* 15; *Ad Nat.* I. 10; *De Pall.* 4.

[4] *Flor.* XVI.

[5] *Cf.* Apuleius's quotation from a Latin *Œdipus* (*Flor.* XVIII).

[6] Aug. *De doctr. Chr.* II. 25, 38.

gestures, dancing, and music, than to the language of the drama. The climax was surely reached under the Vandals, when a pigmy *pantomima* is described as 'dancing' the play of Andromache, and the carrying away of Helen.[1]

In the second century private letters were still sometimes written in Greek, such as the epistle of Pudentilla, which was brought up in evidence against Apuleius,[2] or the *Epistolæ Græcæ* of Fronto; but they have a certain heaviness of style, and were regarded by their authors as open to the charge of barbarism. A small number of Greek words were incorporated into the language of the early Church, when Latin equivalents for phrases indissolubly connected with religion could not easily be found; but the awkward forms they assume, and the attempts made to assimilate them to the analogy of the vernacular, indicate that Greek was unfamiliar to the bulk of African converts.[3] *Ph*, as in Italian, is usually represented by *f*,[4] and the archaic tendency of the African dialect, brought over before the use of *y* was firmly established in Latin, led to such forms as *Chreusis, Seurus, Saturus, Sumposium*.

The result of rhetorical training, not chastened by the Greek ideals of order and moderation, super-

[1] Luxorius, 464.

[2] *Apol.*, p. 105.

[3] *Cf. Diacones,* or *Zacones* (Commod.), *Botruus* (Cypr.), *Omelias* (Vict. Vit.), *Acholitos, Caticumini, Exhorcista* (Pseudo-Cypr.), *Zabolicus* (Commod.) *Horomate* (Act. Perpet.).

[4] Trofimus, Niceforus (Cypr.), Dendroforus (*Inscr.*), Fiala (*Act. Perp.*), Filomela (*Aegrit. Perd.*).

vening on a passionate and semi-Oriental temperament, is visible in most African literary productions. They display a luxuriance of imagination and an ever-present desire to elaborate, to avoid the commonplace at all hazards,[1] whether by the use of archaistic language or of contemporary vulgarisms.

Such a style, though wearisome if long continued, in some instances strikes a note almost unknown in the ancient world, approximating to that which lends their perennial charm to collections of Eastern tales. Favourable specimens of this manner are the legend of Cupid and Psyche in Apuleius, Fronto's allegory of the Creation of Sleep,[2] the *Pervigilium Veneris* (if rightly referred to an African source), and the description in Dracontius[3] of the chariot of Venus:

> 'Florea purpureas retinebant frena columbas,
> Et rosa blandifluas rutilans nectebat habenas;
> Lilia sunt inserta, rosis iuga pulchra volucrum;
> Verbere purpureo Cypris iubet ire iugales,
> Remigat ammotis pennarum plausibus ales.'

The classical rhythm is almost gone; the wealth of epithets, the assonances, and accumulations of words expressing kindred ideas, help to summon before the mind a vivid image which has a certain beauty of its own, similar to the brilliant mosaic work so much beloved by all classes in Africa.

Yet this same straining after realism, these detailed descriptions, may become grotesque or unpleasant,

[1] *Cf.* Fronto's recommendation (p. 63) of 'insperata atque inopinata verba.'

[2] Pp. 228-230. [3] VI. 75-79.

as the scene in Nemesianus[1] where the young Bacchus playfully plucks out hairs from the shaggy chest of his guardian Silenus, the medical consultation in the *Ægritudo Perdicæ*,[2] or the account Dracontius gives of Cupid feathering an arrow from his own wing. Another example on a more serious subject may be sought in Tertullian's fearful vision of the future torments of the heathen:[3] philosophers burning with the disciples whom they had taught to disbelieve in God, charioteers red-hot on fiery wheels, tragic actors shrieking louder than they had ever done in life, and many more.

[1] *Ecl.* III. [2] L. 50 *et seq.* [3] *De Spect.* ad fin.

CHAPTER IV

PRIVATE LIFE AND AMUSEMENTS—THE ARTS

'Venari, lavari, ludere, ridere, occ est vivere.'—*Inscription in the forum at Thamugadi.*[1]

GENTLEMEN farmers living on their estates formed an important class in Africa. The great commercial activity enabled them to acquire wealth without maintaining large slave gangs, and the goodness of the roads and great numbers of camels available for transport caused agricultural products to be speedily conveyed from country villas to the nearest mart. Such villas, whether managed by bailiffs, and only the occasional residence of the master, or the real country seats of wealthy landowners and traders, were numerous in the vicinity of the great towns. Many of the latter class stood in the midst of extensive *horti*, or parks, such as covered most of the western suburbs of Carthage and of the district north of Cirta. They were often richly appointed, with frescoed walls, gilded ceilings, and marble-lined chambers. Cyprian's house, though noisy with slaves within, had vine-shaded cloisters in the midst of spacious and beautiful gardens, well suited for

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 17,938.

rest or quiet discussion.[1] Gardens were fragrant with balsam, and sometimes were used specially for the cultivation of medicinal herbs. In some, singing-birds were let loose, in others, aviaries were kept, sometimes including sea-birds. In many, artificial streams passed between mossy banks. In parks at a greater distance from the capitals stags were kept, and packs of hounds formed a part of the regular equipment; for the provincials were devoted to hunting, hardly relinquishing the pastime when old and crippled with gout.[2] Boating, and fishing with net, line, or harpoon, are frequently represented among the mosaics of African country districts. Considerable portions of the large villa of Pomponianus, probably of fourth-century date, have been excavated some distance west of Cirta.[3] They consist chiefly of the extensive private baths. At one end was a hypocaust surrounded by corridors, and provided with baths of three different temperatures, *caldarium*, *sudatorium*, and *tepidarium*, their walls consisting of marble slabs. Next was an *atrium* 40 feet long, adorned with Corinthian pillars, and adjoining this a swimming-bath with circular gallery. All the rooms have floors tessellated with mosaics, which represent the house itself with its three-storied lookout tower, and the contiguous cottages of the forester, *pecuarii*, or herdsmen, and other servants. There are also shown the stables, in

[1] Pont. *Vit. Cypr.* II. *Cf.* Cypr. *Ad Donat.* I.

[2] *Cf.* Luxorius, 461: 'In podagrum venationi studentem.'

[3] *Mém. de la Soc. Arch. de Const.*, p. 434; *C. I. L.* VIII. 969.

which stand race-horses with their names attached, the park with a troop of gazelles, gardens, and the two dogs Fidelis and Castus. Two special scenes are of interest. In one, dogs are pursuing a deer, followed by beaters and by a troop of horsemen armed with lances. Another, labelled *filosofi locus*, represents an enclosure with vine-covered trees. Beneath a palm sits a matron over whom a parasol is held by a young man in short tunic, who has in the other hand a leash to which a dog is attached, a scene recalling the entertainment given to the philosopher Apuleius in Pudentilla's mansion near Oea. A typical African country house, that at Uthina, is illustrated in Mr. H. S. Jones's *Companion to Roman History*.[1] The living-rooms are grouped round a large peristyle with garden having a fountain at the centre. The colonnade has a pavement tessellated in geometrical patterns, and other rooms are grouped about colonnaded *atria* behind. Stables and slaves' quarters adjoin the entrance. The pleasures of these splendid country seats might be rudely interrupted by the incursion of wild tribes from the south. Mansions far from the coast were, indeed, fortified and defended by bodies of armed slaves, but the open country near the Roman settlements was liable to be ravaged, and the tenants and country people, especially children, carried away to the interior. Thus, in 253 the Bavares plundered Numidia up to the walls of Milev, and a sum of 100,000 sesterces was raised at Carthage to ransom Christian children then taken.[2]

[1] Pl. 30.

[2] *Cf.* Cypr., *Ep.* 62.

Town Life and its Amusements

The best-preserved African town is Thamugadi, or Timgad, an imperial creation of the second century, with streets colonnaded in the later Greek fashion. It had a large oblong forum, colonnaded, and adorned with statues. Adjoining were a basilica, the senate-house, a temple, perhaps containing the municipal treasury in its basement, and various small shops. There is also a provision market with a semicircular row of shops attached, and a public library. The private houses, like the *villæ*, consist mainly of rooms grouped about a colonnaded court, but cover a much smaller area.

There are many allusions to the splendour of African banquets. Garlands and unguents were freely used; musicians and buffoons amused the guests; troops of slaves bringing in dishes and handing round food and drink are favourite subjects for Carthaginian mosaics, which once probably adorned the walls and floors of private banqueting-halls. At marriage feasts the music and festivities were such as to call for the severe denunciation of the Christian moralist.[1]

Town life was diversified by gladiatorial and theatrical performances, by chariot races, and for the more cultured by declamations and poetical or musical contests. Music was popular throughout the provinces, though seldom of a very elevating character. It played a large part in the drama, where recitative and singing almost superseded dialogue, and it was a constant accompaniment

[1] *Id. De Hab. Virg.* 21.

of banquets, and of religious festivals, where the flute was used to excite the participants to a kind of ecstasy. *Psaltriæ*, or female cymbal-players, still appear under the Vandals,[1] and inflated epitaphs on professional singers may be found among the Inscriptions.[2] When in the second century the right was granted to Carthage of holding a Pythian musical contest, no great compunction was felt at placing the foundations of the *Odeum*, which Vigellius Saturninus erected for it, on an ancient Punic cemetery.[3] This building was destroyed by the Vandals, and no remains have been identified with certainty. Some explorers conjecture that it stood on semicircular foundations discovered between the lesser Byrsa and the sea.

A sure method of winning popularity in African towns was by the construction of public baths, especially thermæ, which were peculiarly necessary in districts liable to be swept by sultry winds from the Sahara.[4] Their absence from baths is specially mentioned as an aggravation of the sufferings of Christian martyrs confined in the mines of Curubis.[5]

The Carthaginians were passionately devoted to chariot races and similar contests.[6] *Factiones* with party colours existed as in other Roman towns.

[1] Luxorius, 515.

[2] *E.g.* VIII. 1007, Ἀντιφίλῳ ἥρωι δέμας καὶ ἀτειρέα φωνήν.

[3] Tert. *De resur. carn.* 42.

[4] *Cf.* above, p. 20, and for baths at Cirta *C. I. L.* VIII. 7031.

[5] Cypr. *Ep.* 76, 2.

[6] Tert. *Scorp.* VI., *Exposit. Tot. Mund.*; Salv. *Gub. D.* VI. 12.

Moors were the most expert drivers, and, like the African horses which they drove, were sought for in other provinces also. Even under the Vandals, Jectofian the Green is mentioned by Luxorius[1] as a famous charioteer.

There were theatres at Cirta, Cæsarea, and other towns, and that of Carthage was a favourite resort, being used for performances of almost every kind —tragedies, comedies, rope-walking, conjuring, and semi-philosophical harangues.[2] Its exact position is doubtful, but we are told that it had marble columns and ceiling fretted with gold.[3] It was occasionally used for mimic sea-fights (*naumachiæ*).[4] No native African playwrights are mentioned, and the broad humour of the Atellan farces long continued popular, as well as mimes and pantomimes. Telling situations from Greek tragedies seem to have been selected; or portions of Vergil and Ovid might be sung on the stage, accompanied by dancing. Plautus remained familiar[5] to the Africans, and we read of his Amphitryo being acted to conciliate Jupiter, a curious revival of the original intention of Greek dramatic performances. There existed professional teachers of histrionics, who are bitterly attacked by the Christian writers for the effeminate gestures which were learned from them.[6]

Of the fine arts, architecture and sculpture were

[1] *Epigr.* 482.
[2] *Cf.* Apul. *Flor.* 18.
[3] Apul. l.c.; Pseudo-Cypr. *De Spect.* 9.
[4] Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* 80, 23; 39, 10.
[5] Apul. *Flor.* XVIII.; Arnob. VII.
[6] Cypr. *Ep.* II.

practised with success, but without conspicuous originality. The designers follow Hellenic models, and in most cases probably studied in Greek lands. The Roman Africans, however, show a decided advance on the Phœnicians, who, though admirers of beauty themselves, had no creative power, and imported foreign architects and sculptors, or ready-made Greek and Egyptian works of art. The Romans were less absorbed in commerce, and enjoyed longer periods of peace and prosperity, and the chief settlements were soon filled with fine temples, basilicas, amphitheatres, and circuses, adorned with painting, sculpture, and mosaics. The Corinthian order was that most often employed in public buildings, and there are also several examples of the Composite;[1] but the simpler Greek styles are extremely rare outside Juba's capital of Cæsarea. Marble columns would support the roofs of such buildings, their capitals often worked in marbles of two different colours, the shaft usually cut from a single block. The inner walls would also be covered with thin layers of marble placed on a coating of cement. Many fragments of fine internal decoration have been discovered: carved cornices with dentels, elaborate brackets, oak, laurel, and vine foliage twining round the pillars, and vaults composed of square stone panels carved with flowers. Sometimes inscriptions in metal-work were carried round

[1] These styles are combined in the façade of the large amphitheatre at Thysdrus, which resembles the Roman Colosseum in plan.

the cornices of the inner walls, as in the *nymphæum* at Cirta, where the gold letters were separated by leaves of gold ivy. Carved figures of animals were a favourite form of adornment, such as the dolphins which bordered the marble staircase of the third-century theatre at Rusicade.

An architectural decadence sets in after about A.D. 300, somewhat later than in other parts, and the emperors of the fourth century attempted, by appointing regular salaries and granting exemptions from taxation, to encourage the lessening number of African architects and sculptors.

The sculpture is on the whole so closely modelled on the Greek as to present few points of interest. There are one or two specimens of a transitional Punic style, such as the figure of a god with two other figures resting on his shoulders, and a few examples remain of statues, both gods and contemporary personages, of the early empire. In the third century they are more numerous, and show considerable technical skill, without being lifelike. Bronze statues are common, and the Africans were throughout inclined to use metal as an adjunct to statuary. A statue of a goddess, probably Cælestis, with a gold head is known. An inscription at Cirta gives a detailed account of a statue of Jupiter Victor in the temple of that name. It wore a silver crown carved with thirty oak leaves and fifteen acorns, and held in its right hand a silver globe supporting a statue of Victory, which held a palm of silver leaves and wore a wreath of similar form. In its left was a silver

lance.[1] In the same city was a group consisting of a bronze statue of Venus surrounded by Cupids, set up by Julius Martialis. Many bas-reliefs are very successful, such as that of the woman under a scallop-shell canopy treading on two elephants, on the chief arch of the viaduct at Cirta already referred to. Bas-reliefs on sarcophagi of the Christian age are also of frequent occurrence.[2]

Few perfect specimens of African painting remain, but there are many traces of colour on the stuccoed walls of temples and tombs. A fine example of the fourth or fifth century, of a saint with nimbus, robed as a bishop, was found in an underground chapel at Carthage in 1895.[3] Paintings also adorned the *nymphæum* of Cirta, and formed part of the decorations of many martyrs' shrines. In mosaic work the Africans were acknowledged to possess great proficiency, and they were employed in other provinces.[4] In Carthage there were regular companies of workers who undertook the decoration of both public and private buildings, for which the abundance of white and coloured marbles found in the province afforded great facility. The chief classes of designs were—(1) Geometrical patterns, foliage, and arabesques; (2) separate figures, whether birds, animals,

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 6981.

[2] The rich relief work on the *ambo* of a basilica named after St. Cyprian at Carthage is still mentioned by Gregory of Tours in the sixth century as one of the wonders of Africa.

[3] *Cf.* Audollent, *Carthage Romaine*, p. 660 *et seq.* (a valuable authority on all the African fine arts).

[4] *C. I. L.* XIII. 3225, 2000.

or human beings; (3) symbolical, as a representation of the months and seasons, within a border, found on a tessellated pavement at Carthage; (4) complete scenes, sometimes mythological, such as Pegasus and the nymphs, Europa and the bull, or of contemporary life. Some scenes are altogether fantastic, such as that represented on the vault in the tomb of the poetical goldsmith at Cirta,[1] in which flames play about winged genii, and by them are griffins surrounded by a twining plant. At Rusicade are pictures of native tribes, broad squat figures with peaked caps having a flap before and behind. Another mosaic in the same place shows brightly coloured Nereids surrounded by sea-horses and fish. In general, town mosaics incline to festive designs—chariot races, pleasure-gardens, or, again, allegories such as the tale of Cupid and Psyche. In country villas appear vintage and farmyard scenes, animals, slaves at work, varieties of merchant vessels, etc., with a constant desire to represent motion and life.

After the conversion of Africa the subjects change, but not the style. We then find Christian emblems, such as chalices or vine leaves, on tombs, the epitaphs being of black and white cubes set in the main design. The walls and floor, in later times the roof also, of basilicas and baptisteries, were covered with mosaics in bright colour, depicting foliage, fish, vases, the paschal lamb, the cross, or Scriptural scenes, such as

[1] *Cf.* Delamare, pl. 139, *C. I. L.* VIII. 7156. The epitaph beginning *Hic ego qui taceo versibus mea vita demonstro* is a good example of vulgar Latin.

the three Jews in the furnace. Somewhat similar designs on square earthenware plaques were used to adorn the walls of less important buildings, and earthenware statuettes are frequently met with. Metal and ivory work reached a high degree of excellence, and finely-cut jewels are discovered among the ruins of African villas.

Another art which was characteristic of African life from early in the empire till long after the conversion was that of magic. In the break-up of the official cults during the first century after Christ there was a great influx of Orientalism to all the Western provinces, and this included both religious mysticism and magic. How these might be brought in together is illustrated by the life of Apollonius of Tyana. In Africa the *magus*, whether practising white or black magic, was a familiar figure, in spite of various legal enactments from the days of Tiberius to those of the Digests. Most of the information about these magicians comes from the *Confessions* and *City of God* of Augustine, naturally a somewhat biassed authority, but they seem to have fallen into three main classes: (1) Astrologers (*mathematici*), including fortune-tellers and compilers of horoscopes (*genethliaci*). Such persons had a grave demeanour, and enjoyed a better reputation than the others. Sometimes they seem to have played the part of confessors, consoling their penitents by ascribing human misdoings to the agency of some deity.[1] (2) Quacks (*iatrosophistæ*) who professed

[1] Aug. *Conf.* IV. 3, 4.

to cure diseases by incantations or charms.[1] (3) Diviners and clairvoyants. The latter while in a state of hysteria claimed to reveal the future, or would cast children into a mesmeric trance for the same object, or call up the souls of the dead.[2] Diviners, of whom the fourth-century Albicerius[3] was one of the most famous, could recover lost property, detect robberies, read thoughts, and discover springs of water. African water-finders were in high repute, and were employed in other parts of the empire;[4] even in the fifth century we hear of African diviners still pursuing their trade among the professing Christians of Southern Gaul.[5] A belief in the evil-eye was prevalent from early times,[6] and magic was so widespread that gaolers took special precautions to prevent the escape of prisoners by this means.[7] Love incantations were often resorted to by private persons;[8] and malevolent incantations written on leaves of lead, chiefly emanating from the lower orders, slaves, freedmen, or gladiators, are sometimes met with, partly covered with cabalistic symbols. A similar leaf might be inscribed with an enemy's name and placed in a tomb. The dead man was supposed to convey this to the infernal deities,

[1] *Cf.* Fulg. *Myth.* III.; Luxorius, 453.
[2] Tert. *De anim.* 28; *Apol.* 23.
[3] Aug. *C. Acad.* I. 17.
[4] Cassiod. III. 53.
[5] Sid. Apoll. VIII. 11.
[6] Plin. *N.H.* VII. 2, 4.
[7] *Act. Perpet.* XVI.
[8] *Cf.* Cabrol and Leclercq, *Mon. Eccl. Lit.* I. 4,353, for a Latin example written in Greek letters.

who might then carry out the curse invoked. This device was resorted to by rival charioteers.[1] Amulets were popular, and in particular figures of scorpions in metal, sometimes with cabalistic symbols, were placed under the foundations of houses as a homœopathic safeguard against those scourges of the African provinces.

The *Apology* of Apuleius gives some idea of the equipment and character of the higher class of *magus*. Though the orator apparently succeeded in repelling the charges brought against him, there is little doubt that he claimed supernatural powers, and really believed, as did the writers of the early Middle Ages, following the lead of Lactantius and Augustine, that he possessed them.[2]

That the belief in such arts extended to the highest ranks may be inferred from the statements of the historian that under Constantine a philosopher named Sopater was found guilty of casting a spell on the winds so as to interfere with African cornships bound for Italy, and that a Proconsul of Africa was exiled for consulting sorcerers.[3]

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 12,504.

[2] *Cf.* Abt, *Die Apol. des Apul. und die antike Zauberei.* The author in particular points out the magical uses of a mirror—for instance, for bringing influence to bear on the moon, or crystal-gazing. Cf. *Apol.*, p. 19.

[3] Amm. 28, 1, 19.

CHAPTER V

FRONTO AND HIS CIRCLE

'Miraturque nihil nisi quod Libitina sacravit.'—HORACE.

ROMAN literature had sunk to a low ebb when Fronto, the gifted native of Cirta, arrived in the capital. The Silver Age, then just passed away, had left some splendid monuments of individual genius; but the causes which produced it, the concentration of literary activity in a small circle apart from public life and thought, had permanently weakened the language and restricted its powers of development. It had deprived Latin of its capacity for forming new words by composition, had reduced the number and impaired the freedom of Latin metres, and carried to great lengths the divorce between the written and spoken languages, already sufficiently marked in Cicero's time. No successors to Lucan, Juvenal, or Tacitus, could be hoped for, and Rome was bidding fair to become an unimportant branch of the Hellenistic world of literature.

M. Cornelius Fronto was probably born early in Trajan's reign, and coming from a district whither the influence of Silver Age Latin had hardly

penetrated, speaking the popular dialect taken over by the veterans of Sittius, and devoted from youth to the study of ante-classical writings, he conceived the idea of restoring strength to the language by infusing into the literary idiom the popular elements that constitute the only source to which an attenuated speech can turn for a renewal of vigour. Spasmodic antiquarian revivals had not, indeed, been wanting: from the days of Varro and Sallust *laudatores temporis acti* had always been found to urge by precept or example a return to the models of early republican literature. Fronto, however, had a clear field, and in the estimation of his contemporaries attained remarkable success.

His method was partly sound, partly mistaken. The Latin of the old comedians was undoubtedly more vigorous than that of Seneca or Statius, and many of their phrases had continued in use among the lower orders. Their revival would be a decided gain, but Fronto's system was too often artificial and pedantic. The words he wished to restore were frequently forgotten creations of some daring innovator, which had taken no real root. On the other hand, though Fronto was too scholarly to sanction mere vulgarisms not established by authority, his followers were less well-read or less scrupulous. Archaic vulgarisms were succeeded by such as were merely contemporary, and Fronto became an involuntary apostle of the debasement of a language which he strove to ennoble. A simple and vigorous speech can only evolve itself amidst a

young and strong nationality; an antiquarian revival can but arrest for a time the progress of decay.

We know little of his early life. He seems to have received a good general education at Cirta, and may have spent some time in studying at Carthage, where he continued to have many friends. In later years we find him delivering a thanksgiving in the senate on behalf of the citizens of Carthage,[1] and an inscription proves him to have been the patron of Kalama, near Cirta.[2] While still a young man he migrated to Rome, and during Hadrian's reign, after further study of rhetoric and philosophy, like many of his countrymen, he gained a wide reputation as a pleader. Even then, however, his African birth seems to have exposed him to the ill-will of the overbearing Italian aristocracy.[3] He held the offices[4] of triumvir capitalis, quæstor of Sicily, plebeian ædile and consul suffectus (143), but from ill-health refused the proconsulate of Asia. His orations were the chief foundation of his reputation, especially one addressed to Antoninus Pius[5] on the British war, the speech *De Hereditate Matidiæ*, and one against Pelops, perhaps the celebrated physician. Having amassed sufficient fortune and bought villas in various parts, including the gardens of Mæcenas, Fronto turned his attention to the theory of rhetoric and to grammatical studies, in which branches of learning he became the head of a number of disciples, and

[1] Fronto, p. 260.
[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 5350.
[3] M. Ant. I. 11.
[4] *Inscr. Renier*, 2717.
[5] Eum. *Paneg. Const.* 14.

leader of all who desired to shake off the authority of Seneca and return to the simpler models of the republic. These followers included many Africans, some of whom returned to teach in their native land; others were the natural advisers of African youths studying in Rome.

Fronto thus had considerable influence in repelling the assaults of Greek on Italy and the western provinces, and in restoring to Latin something of its old place in literature. Nor should the issue be looked on merely as a struggle between Latin and Greek for the mastery. In no case could the rough spoken Hellenistic Greek have been generally adopted in the West at this period, but Latin might easily have sunk to the condition of a patois, which would have offered no more resistance to the Visigoths, Lombards, and Franks, than it did to their kinsmen in Britain. The *elocutio novella*, of which Fronto and Apuleius may be considered joint founders, was succeeded by the great patristic literature of the Africans Tertullian, Cyprian, and Lactantius, and these, again, by the rhetorical schools of Bordeaux, Autun, and other Gallic towns. The Church, the schools, and the populace, being thus united in the use of Latin, the inrush of barbarism produced far less effect than it would otherwise have done. The Teutonic element in Spanish and Portuguese is almost negligible, small in Italian and Provençal; even in French, despite the repeated Germanic invasions and settlements, it probably covers less than one tenth of the vocabulary.

His Judgments on his Predecessors

Two of the chief members of this school were Aulus Gellius, from whom we learn much about its methods, and Sulpicius Apollinaris, a Carthaginian, the teacher both of Gellius and of the future Emperor Pertinax. Sulpicius was a great student of Sallust, and author of metrical prologues to Plautus, Terence, and Vergil. Though neither Fronto nor Gellius mentions him, we can hardly doubt that the former's brilliant young countryman, L. Apuleius, was among the orator's hearers during his first stay at Rome.[1]

In view of the loss of Fronto's speeches, we have to form our ideas of his methods from his letters to his imperial pupils Aurelius and Verus, and from the *Noctes Atticæ*. These letters contain estimates of Fronto's chief predecessors, and advice or criticism addressed to his correspondents. Ancient writers are specially commended for their careful choice of words, —such as Cato, Plautus, Ennius, and the archaizing Lucretius and Sallust. Cicero had the power of ornamenting everything which he said, but neglected to choose his words carefully. Cicero's *Epistles*, which naturally admitted of a more popular style, are, however, highly praised. The Augustan Age is passed over with hardly a mention, and of the succeeding period Seneca is taken as the representative, and bitterly satirized for his jerky and epigrammatic phrases; Lucan, too, the nephew of Seneca, is derided for monotony and poverty of thought. Roundabout

[1] For other Africans, *cf.* Fronto, pp. 169, 198, 200, 201; Gell. XIX. 10.

expressions, like one of which Aurelius himself had been guilty, must be abandoned for phrases alike apt and forcible. The coin of modern writers is generally found to be of lead; good money is stamped with a republican mint-mark.

The greatest care is to be exercised in selecting words; for instance, the values of different compounds of a verb must be well weighed, and as, in a population exhausted by conscription, the men who do not press forward for service are the most valuable, so less obvious expressions should, if possible, be chosen. Commonplace phrases are, however, superior to such as are far-fetched, and express our meaning less well. Nor must the order of words be neglected; they should not be arranged like the guests at a drunken carousal. The cases where a repetition of the same word or idea is desirable should be observed. One ought not to allow a substantive to fall flat by prefixing an adjective which necessarily anticipates its meaning, as *triremen navem*. Neologisms are to be avoided; rather let the orator aim at recalling half-forgotten words which will both be recognized as in use among the ancients and give pleasure through their unfamiliarity. Yet such archaisms are recommended only as ornaments, not as suitable for forming the entire substance of a book or speech. Fronto was far from the conservatism of the Greeks, who inclined always to retain the dialect first used by the inventor of any branch of literature. For oratorical training the first requisite is the careful study of old writers; other useful exercises are the collection of

synonyms, the search for rare words, and the improvement of humble or inelegant compositions by inserting elaborate similes, archaisms, etc.

Fronto was an amiable and affectionate man, of high moral character, who in an age of literary frivolity showed real earnestness in the study of letters and a complete contempt for sciolism.[1] Not, perhaps, possessed of great strength of mind, but somewhat credulous and pedantic, he was yet able and industrious, and endowed with a rich and delicate imagination. His *imagines*, or similes, however ill-placed, show the poet's capacity for seeing analogies.[2] Some of them are of real beauty, illustrating that close observation of natural phenomena which characterizes the Romans of Africa. Aurelius while still under the protection of his father-in-law Antoninus, is compared to a lake within an island, the shores of which bear all the buffetings of the waves;[3] and again, when held back from the study of rhetoric by the bands of philosophy, he is like a lofty pine, forcibly bowed to the ground.[4]

Gellius, unlike Fronto, adopts an easy and unpretending style, but his *Noctes Atticæ* are valuable both for the information given about old writers and customs, and for the pictures of the life of these literary Africans who were seeking to regenerate the worn-out Latin of the day. They combined a certain pedantry and exclusiveness with a genuine love of literature. The greatest triumph of a 'grammarian'

[1] P. 61 fin.
[2] Arist. *Poet.* XXII. 17.
[3] P. 45.
[4] P. 143; for others, *cf.* pp. 7, 58.

would be the discomfiture of some pretentious sciolist.[1] They held learned banquets, at which a slave would read grammatical treatises aloud to the guests.[2] Discussions arose among literary men while waiting in the vestibule of the palace to salute the emperor, or when on a visit to a sick friend.[3] The grammarian would spend his mornings in Trajan's library, or wrangle with a rival about a point of accidence in the Campus Agrippæ ; or, if young and enthusiastic, use such a jargon of archaisms as to be supposed to be talking Gallic or Etruscan.[4]

The most gifted of the Africans who resided at Rome during this period was the philosopher, mystic, and novelist, Lucius Apuleius. I reserve the consideration of his philosophical and religious views for another chapter, but his style deserves mention here as a direct outcome of the archaizing tendencies of the Frontonian circle, united to a strong and vivid imagination and comparative freedom from pedantry. In Apuleius the reaction against the far-fetched turns of expression, the epigrams, and high-sounding commonplaces, of the Silver Age reaches its climax. Archaic words are introduced in profusion, but in a great proportion of cases (as may be inferred from their reappearance in later writers unaffected by the archaistic movement, or in Romance[5]) they had remained in use throughout in popular speech ; or, even if not, their meaning was plain to all. But

[1] XVI. 6.
[2] II. 22, *cf.* VI. 13.
[3] II. 26, XX. 1.
[4] XI. 7, *cf.* I. 10.
[5] *E.g.*, Cordolium, Eccille, Gannire, Maccus, Præstigiator.

besides these, a larger number of *ἅπαξ εἰρημένα* could probably be collected from Apuleius than from any other extant Latin writer; and though some may have occurred in works now lost, a considerable residue must be ascribed to the author's own fertility and poetical feeling. Amidst the overthrow of recognized canons of taste, Latin seemed to be recovering the faculty of compounding words and of forming new derivatives and diminutives.

The diction of Apuleius is copious, evincing the greatest art, carefully concealed so as to present the appearance of perfect spontaneity. He was the first to introduce the Oriental warmth of colouring and the minute description, which invest with a charm the poetical prose now superseding regular verse. The classical framework, as to a less extent in some of Fronto's descriptive passages, has almost vanished. Instead we have a series of long rambling clauses, perpetually refining, rejecting, and strengthening. The old devices of antithesis, emphasis, and amplification, disappear, and in their place are flowery but shapeless sentences, in which epithet after epithet is heaped on; or, again, short symmetrical clauses, often alliterative or rhyming, succeed one another without a pause or attempt at subordination.

CHAPTER VI

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION—APULEIUS

'Gentiles quamvis idola colant, tamen summum Deum patrem creatorem cognoscunt et confitentur.'—SATURNINUS, *Bishop of Tucca*.[1]

'So spitzt sich das übermütige Märchen zu einer weihevollen Bekehrungsgeschichte zu; die Eselmetamorphose war nur ein Durchgangspunkt zur inneren Wiedergeburt, jene Demütigung dient der späteren Erhöhung und Verklärung zur Folie.'—RIBBECK.

AT the time when African literature first comes into prominence, the middle of the second century A.D., the received modes of thought on philosophy and religion—indeed, the whole classical culture of the Mediterranean nations—were being revolutionized by the wide dissemination of ideas which the peace and prosperity of the Antonine Age rendered possible. Rapid changes were undergone in one lifetime, as by the Peregrinus described by Lucian; and the tendency was to shake off the agnostic or atheistic attitude which had been prominent a century earlier, and to deepen religious feeling by seeking closer communion with some supreme deity, either by adopting Oriental cults or by initiation into the reviving Greek mysteries. The same change of feel-

[1] In Hartel's *Cyprian*, I. 454.

ing affected philosophy. Mainly intellectual schools like the Epicurean or Peripatetic[1] were losing ground; Stoicism, which was more compatible with an earnest religious attitude (a school to which a famous African of an earlier generation, Annæus Cornutus of Leptis, the friend of Persius, had belonged), still had some noteworthy adherents. The religious mystic would, however, be more attracted by the transcendentalism which had resulted from the half-understood demon-theories of Plato combined with certain Pythagorean or Oriental tenets. Such a philosophy could be made to harmonize with religious mysticism without difficulty. The mystic would imagine some one supreme god with whom, in this age of syncretism, he could readily identify the chief deities of other mythologies, or even of the same, to avoid the risk of angering some neglected power. This deity would be the creator and the true principle of life, but round him would be grouped the minor gods of the old belief, the demons, genii, and protecting spirits, like the monitor of Socrates, who were intermediaries between God and man. The doctrines of immortality and of future bliss or punishment would be strongly insisted on, and a professional priesthood would become a necessity. There was no great amount of secret revelation, the main object being the bringing of the worshipper into direct communion with his god by purifying ceremonies and a holy life.

[1] Augustine (*Conf.* IV. 16) implies that Aristotle's works were practically unknown in Africa.

These feelings were particularly strong in Africa, where the Semitic cast of thought encouraged belief in a vague monotheism, or at least in the identification of the chief deities as different aspects of one power. The kindly nature-gods of Greece and Rome, who could be bought over to favour the worshipper by a certain amount of sacrifice and prayer, were very different from Baal or Tanit or Melcarth, sometimes fierce and destructive, sometimes benign, but at least all-powerful, and to be represented by a symbol rather than by any figure in human form. In such conditions it is not surprising that the lack of deep or original thought was fatal to genuine philosophical study. Travelling sophists with their *inverecunda iactantia* were indeed frequently seen in Carthage and other large towns,[1] but they did little more than deliver declamatory lectures of a popular type to chance auditors, making no attempt to gather a permanent following; and philosophy was acknowledged to be the art of living well and speaking well.[2]

Apuleius, who best represents the fusion between philosophy and religion, was born about A.D. 125 at the veteran colony of Madaura, on the borders of Numidia and Gætulia. The son of one of the *duoviri*, he would have the right of sitting in the local *curia*. He received the chief part of his education, especially in grammar and rhetoric, at Carthage, and continued to acknowledge with gratitude his debt to the African university.[3] This was supple-

[1] Cypr. *De Bon. Pat.* II. fin.
[2] Apul. *Flor.* VII. [3] *Ibid.*, XVIII.

mented by a stay, first at Athens and other Greek towns, where he acquired much religious and occult lore, then at Rome, where, from the number of local allusions,[1] he seems to have produced (possibly anonymously at first) his *Metamorphoses*, and where he would also come under the influence of the Frontonian school of rhetoric. Returning to Africa about 155, he contracted a marriage with a wealthy widow of Oea, and after some further travels settled down at Carthage as a professional *rhetor*, and eventually as *sacerdos provinciæ*, or director of the imperial worships.

A large proportion of his works are lost, and many of them were only compilations designed to make up an encyclopædia of the liberal arts. They included a number of poetical compositons, historical, zoological, arithmetical, musical, astronomical, medical, and horticultural works, besides the extant treatises on philosophy. These are devoted to an exposition of the Platonic tenets, of which Apuleius shows no real grasp, and to a discussion about the nature of demons, probably based on some lost Greek original. Another treatise, an adaptation of the pseudo-Aristotelian *De Mundo*, is concerned chiefly with astronomy and physical geography. Some spurious works on logic and on the Hermes of the mysteries have also been attached.

[1] Thus (VI. 8) the finder of Psyche is to produce her behind the *metæ Murciæ*, the site of a chapel of Venus on the Aventine slope. Cupid breaks the *lex Julia*, and gods who absent themselves from the council, like defaulting senators, incur a fine of 100,000 sesterces.

It is on the *Metamorphoses* that the reputation of Apuleius chiefly rests, and it is this romance which strongly exhibits the Janus-like nature of the writer, a religious mystic deeply conscious of the hollowness of life, the true beauty of holiness and communion with the divine, and from another point of view the professional rhetorician and public entertainer. The soul of the hero, who is represented as naturally inclined to good, but with no very strong principles, becomes in Pythagorean fashion incarnate in an animal, and that one of the most despised. In this state he is able to study all the seamy side of life: jealous husbands, deceitful wives, savage stepmothers, dissolute priests, brigands, and dishonest servants. He hears the allegory of how the Soul is by patience and divine grace purged of her mortal weakness, passes unharmed through the shadow of death, and is at last raised by heavenly Love to a celestial sphere. Finally his own soul, through the grace of the supreme deity—in truth, Isis of the Egyptians, but among other peoples called Cybele, Athena, Venus, Artemis, Persephone, Demeter, Hera, or Hecate[1]—is restored to a human body; and after the solemn rites of initiation, which prefigure death and rebirth, he becomes a full participant in divine knowledge and favour. Combined with this are presented many playful, romantic, or tragic scenes from middle and low class life in the provinces, as studied by a shrewd and impartial spectator, depicted with a realism till then unequalled,

[1] *Met.* XI. 5

and in a style almost Oriental in its richness of colouring.

The Greek novel, wrongly attributed to Lucian, from which, or from a common source with which, Apuleius derived the leading idea of his plot, is known, but it is bald and dull, and the mystical element is lacking. Probably, also, most of the other episodes, some of which have been familiar themes in many quarters of the globe, are also borrowed, for Apuleius is not strikingly inventive. His language, however, and, especially towards the end, his religious fervour, give him a unique place in the ancient world; while in his power of word-painting, of describing rural scenes, and of drawing character in a few rapid strokes, he unites some of the peculiar qualities of mime, idyll, and satire, with those of the contemporary Greek erotic romance.

Little remains to be said on the study of philosophy in Africa. A translation of some of Plato's works by Victorinus appeared under Constantine, and this was studied by Augustine, who himself made some progress with Greek philosophy.[1] An acquaintance with this is also displayed[2] by one of the last African prose writers on a secular theme, the Carthaginian attorney Martianus Capella, a heathen, and, like Apuleius, a native of Madaura. His work, published probably early in the fifth century, is called *De Nuptiis Mercuri et Philologiæ*

[1] *Conf.* VIII. 2.

[2] *Cf.* II. 212, where the author has a vision of Greek philosophers performing appropriate actions.

on the seven liberal arts, and is of a mystical nature. Its contributions to learning are slight, but it is not without value, as illustrating the development then attained by music, rhetoric, geometry, etc., and as epitomizing the works of many earlier writers, from Varro to Solinus. The form is mixed prose and verse, like the old satire, the prose portions being sometimes tame, sometimes florid and declamatory. The verse is incorrect, but shows knowledge of many less common metres. Capella affects loaded epithets and short balanced clauses in the manner of Apuleius. His treatise was very popular in the Middle Ages, when it exercised an influence on education, sculpture, and illumination.

It remains to review the principal worships, whether purely Roman, mixed Roman and Punic, or Oriental, which prevailed in Africa. The Romans were always disinclined to leave the cults of a subject people in open antagonism to their own; and while religious persecution is rare in the ancient world, much ingenuity was shown, not only in Africa, but in Gaul and other parts, in identifying two entirely different mythologies and sets of usages. In Africa the names of the amalgamated deities became predominantly Roman, and Punic symbolism gave place to Roman anthropomorphism, but otherwise the chief worships remained primarily Oriental, and retained large numbers of enthusiastic adherents down to the time of the conversion of the provinces.

Official Roman cults not identified with pre-

existing beliefs never gained much foothold outside the Italian colonies. We find allusions in inscriptions to the deified personification of Rome, her priests being nearly always Italian officials.[1] There were many flamens devoted to the service of the deified emperors as a body,[2] or of some separate emperor, and provincial *concilia* met in the chief towns to organize the ceremonies connected with it. Some large towns also had Capitoline temples, dedicated to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, even these sometimes associated with alien worships, as Mithras,[3] or local genii.[4] Mars was almost confined to garrison towns, Liber seldom appears away from Italian settlements; Vesta, Janus, and Bona Dea, have few dedications. The really popular cults were those of Baal-Saturn, Melcarth-Hercules, Tanit-Cælestis, Eschmoun-Æsculapius, and Mercury.

Baal, the chief Phœnician male deity, had by the time of the Roman conquest completely absorbed the worship of Molech, the protector of Tyre, and was closely connected with Melcarth ('the lord of the city'), and with Tanit or Pené-Baal ('the face of Baal'), the moon-goddess. Though in Carthage his position was subordinate to that of his feminine counterpart, he was much regarded in Cirta,[5] and still more in the country districts, where in votive inscriptions his name stands alone, or before that of Cælestis. The Romans felt disinclined to iden-

[1] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 1427 (Thubursicum).
[2] *Ibid.*, 8496, 8995.
[3] *Ibid.*, 4578.
[4] *Ibid.*, 2611, 26 12.
[5] *E.g.*, 7104.

tify this sanguinary deity with their own national god, and usually called him Saturn, in view of the cannibalist tendencies attributed to the corresponding Greek divinity. We thus have the curious spectacle of the kindly agricultural god, who reigned in Italy in the age of innocence, worshipped with the rites of the ferocious fire-lord of the Ammonites. Children of the best families were placed on the arms of a brazen figure, which let the victims fall into a furnace, while flutes and drums drowned their cries.[1] At first two were offered annually;[2] later bulls and rams were used on ordinary occasions, human victims being reserved for times of public calamity or danger. A determined attempt was made by the Roman government to put down these barbarities under Tiberius, and several priests of Baal were crucified at Carthage on the trees of the grove which surrounded their temple; but the human sacrifices continued in secret till the end of the second century.[3] The priests wore a red robe with a large purple stripe.[4] Though worshipped in larger towns in a temple with statues, more often Baal was symbolized by *stelæ* representing the sun's rays, sometimes inscribed, and fixed in the ground against walls or on hill-tops. The god was often known by the euphemistic title of 'the old man.'[5]

[1] Diod. XX. 14, 6; Plin. *N. H.* 36, 5. *Cf.* Aug. *Civ. D* VII. 26.

[2] Dracont. V. 148.

[3] Tert. *Apol.* XV.

[4] *Id., De Test. Anim.* II.

[5] Aug. *De Cons. Ev.* I. 36.

The worship of Hercules, the Punic Melcarth, extended as far as Spain, the Pillars of Hercules at Gades being merely the *stelæ* of Baal. He was sometimes associated with Jupiter, and in a temple dedicated by Sept. Severus, probably at Carthage, with Bacchus.

The identification of Tanit of Lebanon, the giver of fertility, and practically the same as the moon-goddess Astarte, with any Roman divinity, was very imperfectly carried out. Her new name, Cælestis, was seldom joined with another, though a few cases of association with Juno, Diana, and Venus, occur; and Venus in Apuleius, as in other late writers, has a malign aspect in some respects. The original Cælestis temple was attributed to Dido, and it was rebuilt on the old site early in the Roman period, and retained the statue of the goddess, a shapeless stone body with the arms raised. This statue was removed to Rome by the demented Elagabalus, in order to be married to the stone sun-symbol which he had brought from Syria, but it was restored to Carthage by Alexander Severus. One emblem of this deity, the protecting power or demon of Carthage,[1] was the effigy of a virgin being carried off to heaven on a lion,[2] and she so appears on coins of M. Aurelius, Sept. Severus, and on a *stele* at Sitifis.

This cult was extraordinarily popular in the third century, and extended even to Rome. Here there was a shrine at the north-west angle of the Capitol;

[1] Polyb. VII. 9. [2] Apul. *Met.* VI. 4.

three priestesses were attached to it, and the *Inscriptions* call the *dea virgo Cælestis* 'the mighty protector of the Tarpeian mount.'[1] Legacies could lawfully be left for the support of this cult.[2]

From the time of the Antonines till some way into the third century, the Carthaginian temple was the seat of a much-frequented oracle, which drew to itself some of the former importance of Delphi.[3] The priestesses of Cælestis were excited to ecstasy by flutes, and then answered inquiries. This practice may have been put down by the government before the middle of the third century, and there is evidence that it had had some effect in stirring up usurpers. Many votive inscriptions are found thanking the goddess for advice secretly given, and she was supposed to have the power of bringing rain. The sacred robe, or *peplos*, which covered the idol was richly embroidered, and was used to invest the tyrant Tetricus in 265, on his elevation to the throne of Africa.[4] At Carthage there were annual games in honour of Cælestis and Cybele jointly, when the statue was placed before the shrine in the Area, and licentious songs were sung by actors.[5] The statue was then solemnly washed, clearly an adaptation of the Roman washing of the image of the Magna Mater in the Almo. At Sicca the worship of Cælestis was attended with rites[6] such as disgraced

[1] *Notiz. delle Scavi*, 1892, p. 407. [2] Ulp. frag. 226.
[3] *Cf.* Capit. *Macrin.* 3, *Pert.* 4; Firmic. *Err. Prof. Rel.* 4.
[4] Treb. Poll. *Trig. Tyr.* 28. [5] Aug. *Civ. D.* II. 4.
[6] Val. Max. II. 6.

the cults of Corinthian and Cyprian Aphrodite, and this may in part explain the vehement outbreaks of Arnobius, a native of this town, against some of the aspects of paganism. From the vaguer denunciations of Augustine, it is to be feared that a similar class of *hierodulæ* existed at Carthage.

The temple stood on the lesser Byrsa, probably not far from the shrine of Baal-Saturn, and was of vast extent, adorned with rich columns and mosaics.[1] There was a large area surrounded by porticoes, and enclosed by walls with openings to several chapels. Considerable remains have been found: an apse, Corinthian capitals, marble columns, mosaics, cisterns, and an aqueduct.[2]

Long after the conversion of the empire Cælestis remained an object of reverence and worship. Initiations into the cult lasted down to the Vandal conquest, and children were dedicated to her from birth.[3] Many professing Christians continued their sacrifices even after the temple was closed under Constantine, and the road to it planted with thorns. In 399 the seat of the bishop was established in the temple, but the building was demolished thirty years later on a pagan revival being apprehended.[4]

In the same temple was the shrine of Ceres, who was in Africa more usually worshipped as the Cereres. The legend was that this goddess had been brought

[1] Anon. *De Promiss. et Prædict. Dei* III. 38.
[2] Delattré, *Bull. Epigr.*, 1884, p. 317.
[3] Salv. *Gub. D.* VIII. 2.
[4] Prosp. Aq., 18, 6, 7.

from Sicily, before the Roman conquest, to ward off a pestilence; and, in harmony with this, marble serpents have been found near her statue. There is, however, little doubt that the *Ceres Africana*, as she is often called in contrast to the *Ceres Græca*, is merely another aspect of Tanit, namely, the chthonian; and as the empire advanced she became entirely merged in Cælestis. Ceres-worship was rare in the West, and the use of priests in Carthage (the annual Cereales, who were greatly respected) for this service was an unusual feature. Priestesses, mostly widows, also existed,[1] and the worshippers were distinguished by a fillet.

Eschmoun-Æsculapius ranked next in dignity to Saturn and Cælestis. He had a temple on the summit of the Byrsa at Carthage, reached by a long flight of steps. It was rebuilt by the Romans, and enclosed the large public library and archives; Apuleius, himself a priest of this god, delivered many of his addresses in one or other of these buildings.[2] Some remains have been found, showing that the temple was of white marble with friezes and fluted Corinthian columns. The priests wore an archaic costume, with *pallium* and sandals.[3] In other parts of Africa the worship of Æsculapius was joined to that of Cælestis, and shrines were also set up to him near healing springs.[4] As in Greece, patients spent one or more nights in the temple, when remedies

[1] Tert. *Ad Ux.* I. 6, *De Exhort. Cast.* XIII.
[2] *Cf.* Apul. *Flor.*, XVIII.; *Bull. Epigr.*, 1885.
[3] Tert. *Pall.* I. [4] *C. I. L.* VIII. 997.

were revealed in dreams. Round the Æsculapius temple at Lambæsis are grouped several buildings with baths and hypocausts, perhaps designed to aid the curative treatment. The native originals of Silvanus and Mercury are unknown, but both seem to have received fresh characteristics after their introduction from Italy, and they are often confused with each other. Silvanus is primarily a god of hunting, worshipped in the country or in small towns, sometimes in conjunction with Libyan deities.[1] Mercury, sometimes called *patrius* or *Augustus*, is thought to represent some Punic god of commerce,[2] originally symbolized by the *caduceus*, which is found instead of the palm on some Carthaginian coins. Roman anthropomorphism replaced this rod by a figure of Mercury. It is characteristic of the cruel Punic religion that at Carthage a person attired as Mercury[3] experimented on fallen gladiators with a heated rod, to be certain that they were dead, before handing them over to the care of Pluto.

Turning to non-Punic Oriental cults, M. Cumont distinguishes four successive waves of Oriental religious influences (though affected by Hellenistic philosophical speculation) which swept over the western provinces, connected respectively with Asia Minor (Cybele and Attis), Egypt (Isis and Serapis), Syria (various local Baals or Jupiters, and Atargatas, or *the Syrian goddess*), and Persia (Mithras,

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 17,621, 2650.
[2] *Cf.* Toutain, *Cultes Païens dans l'Empire Romain.*
[3] Tert. *Apol.* 15.

later Manichæism). Three of these had their effect in Africa, though this was less marked than in Italy owing to the greater vitality retained by the Romano-Punic national worships. Cybele-worship was important from its association with Cælestis, who, as already mentioned, rode on a lion like the earth-goddess of Pessinus, and whose statue was annually washed with similar ceremonies. With this goddess was connected the curious brotherhood of *Dendrophori*, who appear at Carthage, Cirta, and Rusicade, in the course of the third century.[1] There is some reason for thinking that they were at one time an Italian corporation of woodcutters, devoted to the service of Silvanus; and when the cult of Cybele reached Italy, their god was identified with her minister Attis. In Africa they supplied wood for the public works, had a prefect, a chest, a common meeting-place, and perhaps, as elsewhere, helped in extinguishing fires. They also had certain priestly functions, at the annual festival carrying round the sacred tree figuring Attis, the dead spirit of vegetation; and performing the mystic *taurobolium* or *criobolium* for the safety of the emperor.[2] They were elected by the local *curiæ*, subject to the approval of the central body of fifteen at Rome. The *galli*, or begging priests of Cybele, were still familiar figures at Carthage in the fourth century.[3]

Isis had enthusiastic worshippers at Carthage in the Antonine Age, but the cult died out earlier than

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 1257, 6940, 7956.
[2] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 5524, 8203.
[3] Aug. *Civ. D.* VII. 26.

some, probably soon after the reign of Constantine. A *Vicus Isidis* existed, and probably passed her temple.[1] Another shrine was set up to her and Serapis by a second-century *legatus* at Lambæsis. There was a Serapeum at Carthage, where Neptune also was worshipped, under a Serapicus sacerdos,[2] who at one time bore the Egyptian name of Manetho. A Serapis statue with a dog's head [3] has been found, and effigies of crocodiles and serpents were also worshipped.[4]

The third or Syrian wave, which was the most demoralizing, and which produced its effect in Italy largely through the number of Asiatic traders and freedmen already settled there, had no great influence in Africa. The Phœnician religion corresponded closely to the earlier form of the Syrian, and the latter therefore found the ground already occupied. Apuleius speaks with loathing of the devotees of the Syrian goddess,[5] and the attitude of the Carthaginians towards the contemptible Syrian emperor who robbed them of the Palladium of their city[6] was very similar. One record there is of Syrian influence, a dedication in the oasis of El Kantara to Malagbal ('the messenger of the lord,' originally Babylonian, but identified with Astarte) by a body of Palmyrene mercenaries.[7]

The Persian sun-god Mithras, whose worship,

[1] Tert. *Idol.* XX.
[2] Id., *De Theatr.* VIII. *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 1002, 1007, 1009.
[3] *Eph. Epigr.* VII. 167.
[4] Cypr. *Ad Demetr.* XII.
[5] *Met.* VIII. 29.
[6] V. supr., p. 75
[7] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2497.

the highest of all pagan cults, had been first introduced to the West by Pompey's legionaries, had many African shrines; of one, a grotto on the Capitol of Cirta, we have special mention.[1] His mysteries, with which from the third century onwards those of Attis were largely combined, were celebrated in a cave; and hunger, thirst, flagellation, solitude, sometimes also the baptism of blood, figuring death and rebirth, were imposed on all who aimed at perfection. A regular scale of dignity among the initiated existed, and at Carthage there are examples of the admission of women. Like the later Isis cult, Mithraism had evidently borrowed certain features from Christianity, as well as from the Roman military organization. These two were the most formidable rivals to the Gospel in the third and fourth centuries. The religious philosophy of Mani, which inherited its principle of the dualism of good and evil powers from Mithraism, but combined with it a wide astronomical knowledge, found some adherents in Africa in the fourth century, and Manichæan lecturers had much influence in the days of Augustine, who, attracted by their apparent piety and asceticism, for some years made a profession of their creed.

The Semitic cult of meteorites, known in Africa as *Abbaddir*, and identified by mythologists with the stone swallowed by Saturn, was very prominent in some parts, especially in Numidia.[2]

[1] *C. I. L.* VIII. 6975.

[2] *Gloss. Pap.* s.v. Abbaddir; *C. I. L.* VIII. 19,121, 19,122.

Another feature, perhaps of native origin, was the great reverence paid to the souls of the dead. Libyan inscriptions in honour of dead kings are of frequent occurrence, and the custom is attested by Tertullian and Cyprian.[1] Departed heroes continued to be worshipped,[2] as Dido had been in the days of Carthaginian independence;[3] and many writers testify to the prevalence of soul-worship among the Roman settlers. Tombs at Carthage were carefully furnished with vases, lamps, pins, needles, money, and earthenware figures, and we hear of *collegia tenuiorum*, or burial clubs among the poorer classes, which defrayed the cost of an honourable funeral for the members.

Of other native worships little is recorded. A Roman governor thanks the gods of the Moors for allowing him to conquer the wild tribe of Bavares,[4] and there are allusions to a 'Diana of the Moors,' to a 'divinity of Mauritania,' to Bacax, a Numidian god of caverns worshipped in the grotto of Taya at Cirta; and in the same place was the shrine of another native deity, Ifru. The Libyans adopted the Punic custom of setting up votive *stelæ*, which are found carved with grotesque figures and inscriptions in native characters.

[1] Tert. *Apol.* 24; Cypr. *Quod Idola*, 2; *C. I. L.* VIII. 8834.

[2] Aug. *Civ. D.* II. 30.

[3] Just. XVIII. 6: 'Quamdiu Carthago invicta fuit pro dea culta est.'

[4] *Eph. Epigr.* VII. 165.

CHAPTER VII

POETRY

> Omnis et antiqui vulgata est fabula sæcli,
> Nos saltus viridesque plagas camposque patentes
> Scrutamur.'
>
> NEMESIANUS, *Cyneg.* 47.

THOUGH Africa produced few poets, even in the days of Horace[1] it supplied a market for the works of Roman writers when the sale began to slacken in Italy. In Africa, too, more inscriptions in verse are found, often in ambitious metres or acrostics, than in any other province. Barbarous in form and language, they confessedly emanate from men of humble station—a courier,[2] reaper,[3] or goldsmith.[4] This of itself implies a wider dispersion of the taste or versification than could be inferred from a too great precision, such as would result from the employment of professional epitaph-writers. African poems fall into three classes, from a confusion between which some misunderstanding has arisen: works of educated men who definitely set classical models before them, and present few provincial peculiarities, *e.g.*, Nemesianus, Dracontius, or Cor-

[1] *Ep.* I. 20, 13.
[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 1027
[3] *Eph. Epigr.* V. 279.
[4] V. supr. p. 53

ippus; those of poets hardly less educated who abandoned classical models, and sought, by adapting their verses to the popular accent and mode of speech, to win readier acceptance of their message, such as Commodianus and Verecundus; lastly, verses which are the outcome of mere ignorance. Here are vague recollections of classical authors read at school, elaborate metres half understood, absurd grammatical mistakes, and a real poetical vocabulary mixed with vulgarisms. Such kinds of poetry are plentifully represented in the African inscriptions.

The claims of the fugitive pieces of Florus, a poet of the age of Hadrian, and of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, which probably belongs to the end of the second century, to an African origin, are doubtful. The latter, however, has close resemblances to acknowledged African works in its strongly rhetorical colouring, its appreciation of natural beauty, and in some traces of late and provincial language.[1] It is the work of a learned man, familiar with Ovid and Vergil, who returned to the ancient trochaic tetrameter which had been disused by poets through the classical age, but remained popular with the lower orders, and was adopted by soldiers for the rude chants with which they accompanied their triumphant entries into Rome. It was again employed by the African writers Augustine,

[1] *De* for material, or = propter ; *mane* = cras (*cf.* Fr. demain) ; *totus* = omnis ; syncope (*perviclanda*) ; fem. suffixes in *-trix*, which are common in African Christian literature.

Martianus Capella, Luxorius, and Dracontius. This metre the author of the *Pervigilium* treated with unusual dignity and grace, and by means of the refrain and of several unliterary phrases and constructions endeavoured to recall, in what seems intended as the complaint of an unhappy lover, some of the charm of early village songs and pastorals.

The chief African poems which have come down definitely dealing with rural pursuits are the *Cynegetica* and four eclogues of the elegant Carthaginian versifier Nemesianus, who also wrote on fishing, and possibly on fowling. He flourished in the reigns of Carus and his sons, enjoying the friendship of the prince Numerian, with whom he entered into some poetical contests. The *Cynegetica* claims to be the first Latin poem on the chase, a token that the work of Gratius on that subject had already fallen into oblivion. In a long exordium the poet points out the threadbare nature of most available themes, so that he is compelled to turn to rural pursuits. He promises, like many of his predecessors, to sing at a future time of the victories of his imperial patrons, and proceeds to deal at some length with the breeding of dogs, passing on to recommendations about the selection of horses, in the course of which the fragment breaks off abruptly. It consists of 325 hexameters, and was composed in Africa.[1] The eclogues amount in all to about 300 lines. The close imitation of Vergil, extending

[1] L. 251.

even to the use of a refrain, prevents these from throwing much light on the state of letters; but the romantic realism with which mythological legends are treated is very unlike anything in classical poetry. There are two or three archaisms and some strange compounds, but the style is on the whole fairly correct. Only two or three attempts at epic are referred to during these centuries; one is the poem on Alexander the Great, by a friend of Apuleius, 'the sweet and learned Clemens'; another, the *Antoninias* of the elder Gordian, the unfortunate emperor of Africa, a long work in thirty books on the deeds of Antoninus Pius and Aurelius.

A few stray elegiac poems survive, and the metre continued in use for erotic works of small compass (such as those quoted in the *Apology* of Apuleius), and for short mythological poems like the *De Ave Phœnice*, sometimes attributed to Lactantius. All the grace and brightness of the Ovidian couplet have disappeared, the hexameters are harsh and irregular, the pentameters have large numbers of inelegant endings; nor was it till the age of Ausonius and Namatian that anything like a classical form was restored to a metre which had gone out of favour even in the Silver Age.

As often happens when a form of literature has fallen into neglect, the rules which governed poetry were carefully studied. The fragments of a metrical treatise quoted by grammarians under the name of Juba, and apparently belonging to the second century, are too slight for us to be certain of its

African origin,[1] though this has been suggested. The work of the learned Moor Terentianus has, however, come down. The writer describes himself as a man who had retired from active life, and wished to maintain his faculties in full exercise The poem falls into three parts, discussing (1) letters, (2) syllables and words, (3) metres, not only those of Horace, as the title of the work promises, but others, such as Saturnian, anapæstic, and Phalæcian hendecasyllable, all of which he derives ultimately from the hexameter and iambic trimeter. Terentianus displays an extraordinary faculty for expressing the most complex and prosaic ideas in elegant verse of various metres. He also shows that all Africans had not been led away by Fronto's depreciation of the classical age. He evidently had a good knowledge of Greek (though hinting that this was not very common among his countrymen), and mentions Sappho, Euripides, Theocritus, Phalæcus, etc., besides referring the national Saturnian measure to a Greek source. While praising the eloquence of C. Gracchus,[2] and appreciating the genius of some Silver Age writers,[3] he draws the bulk of his examples from Catullus, Vergil, and Horace, speaking without enthusiasm of the *dulcia opuscula* in paltry metres by his contemporaries.

Though classical poets were still studied in the schools, the laws regulating their prosody were

[1] *Cf.* Teuffel, § 373, a. 5.
[2] 988. [3] 2135-6.

comprehended only by a few. Africans are frequently blamed by the grammarians for their neglect of quantity,[1] no metrical convention prevailed throughout the province, and the few correct versifiers are studied and artificial. In the various Christian poems produced in Africa from the middle of the third century, often by men of some education, measures and accentuation of a popular type are introduced in preference to the display of classical learning, which the Church long discountenanced. Among the most important are the two hexameter treatises of Commodianus *Instructiones* and *Carmen Apologeticum*, the *Hymnus de Resurrectione*, variously attributed to Tertullian, Cyprian, and Verecundus (an African bishop of the Vandal period), and the *Exhortatio Pœnitendi* of the last-named. The date of the *Carmen Apologeticum* is fixed by internal evidence as contemporary with the Gothic invasion of the third century, and following on the seventh persecution of the Church, that of Decius. The author appears to have been a lawyer of heathen origin, a native of Gaza in Syria (though probably of Roman descent), and according to the *subscriptio* a bishop. The notice of Commodianus in Gennadius[2] contains no allusion to his place of settlement, but the number of parallelisms in language and metre[3] between Commodianus and

[1] Consent. 392, 3. *Cf.* Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* 138, 20; *De Doctr. Chr.* 4, 24.

[2] *Script. Eccl.* XV.

[3] *Cf. C. I. L.* VIII. 152, for similar barbarous verses in Africa early in the third century.

African poetical inscriptions, the resemblance to the style of the African *Acta Martyrum* and of the letters of Cyprian's correspondents, as well as the similarity of the luxurious life here denounced to that which is known to have existed at Carthage and other cities, make it probable that he was one of the numerous African bishops,[1] who were often chosen from the lower orders, and were hardly superior to ordinary presbyters. The poet was well read in the classical authors and the early African Fathers; his cæsura is strict, and here and there lines fulfil the most exacting laws of metre. Assonance and alliteration are common; there are tendencies towards rhyme and some leonine verses. Hiatus occurs, but elision very sparingly. The grammatical inflexions are of interest. Cases are in confusion, and becoming superseded by prepositions; the old accusative and infinitive construction is giving place to subordinate clauses with *quod, quia,* or *quoniam;* comparatives are formed with *plus;* irregularities of declension or conjugation are smoothed away; intransitive verbs become transitive; neuter plurals are mistaken for feminines in *-a;* and many other traces of Romance usage may be discerned.

Classical Latin verse had corresponded to a transition from a strictly quantitative system like the Greek to the accentual, and the accentual or rhythmical tendencies gained fresh strength in the third century, especially affecting the dactylic measures, as less in harmony than some others with

[1] *Cf.* Boissier, *Commodien* in *Mélanges Renier.*

the genius of the language. This change is well illustrated by the semi-popular hexameters of these early Christian poets. The general form and accent of classical verse are preserved, but the rules of quantity are greatly relaxed. In popular language all unaccented syllables might be treated as short; in these poets long syllables are replaced by accented, short by unaccented. An accented long syllable is very rarely placed where classical rules require a short; *e.g.*, we do not find an ending such as tām măgnŭm casum. Endings, however, like the following, from African inscriptions—Dulce sŏlaciolum, Tardă viator iter, Natŏs amavit—where an unaccented long syllable is treated as short, are common also in the Christian poets: *e.g.*, Non tĕ pudet, stulte, tales adŏrare tabellas.[1]

[1] Commod. *Instr.* I. 14, 16. *Cf.* Vernier in *Rev. de Philologie*, XV., where the question is fully discussed.

CHAPTER VIII

CHRISTIAN AFRICA

'Quis melior medicus quam passus vulnera victor?'—COMMODIANUS.

'Felix episcopus dixit, "Melius est me igni aduri quam scripturas deificas, quia bonum est obedire Deo magis quam hominibus." '—*Acta Felicis.*

THERE were numerous settlements of Jews in Africa, especially after the fall of Jerusalem, and synagogues are mentioned at Cirta, Sitifis, and Carthage. Three Jewish teachers of the law are referred to in the Talmud as resident at Carthage, and to the north of the city have been found portions of a Jewish cemetery with traces of about 200 tombs, some with Hebrew inscriptions and richly frescoed walls, suggesting that the Jews here were men of wealth. Having been once an independent people, and having a separate national God, they did not come into conflict with the authorities, but through them Christianity was probably introduced into Africa early in the second century. The bulk of the Jewish community, however, showed determined hostility to the new faith, and seem to have been partly responsible for the gross libels with which it was assailed,[1] still

[1] *Cf.* Tert. *Ad Nat.* I. 14; Front. ap. Min. Fel. IX.; Apul. *Met.* IX. 14.

opposing the efforts of Christian teachers in the time of Cyprian.[1]

The underlying monotheism, which the Christians themselves attributed to African paganism, its tendency to worship groups of two or three deities closely associated, and in fact merely different aspects of one power, together with the absence of strongly marked personalities in its mythology, made the change an easy one, and the new religion was embraced by the provincials with their usual impetuosity. Though converts were also drawn from rural districts, the Church aimed first at securing the centres of life and activity, and here became strongly organized. Bishops, whose representative gatherings formed the only free assemblies in the empire, were chosen from the middle and professional classes for the most part, and in early days were frequently converted rhetoricians. Their legal knowledge was utilized by the congregations, who preferred to abide by their decisions rather than resort to heathen courts. Already familiar with public life, they proved capable administrators, prepared to discourage both the fanaticism which introduced sectarian warfare at an early date, and the asceticism which impelled many converts, shrinking from the depravity of contemporary paganism, to withdraw altogether from society. The gathering of presbyters (*consessus*) also had certain judicial functions conferred by the consent of the congregations,[2] and acted with one or more

[1] Cypr. *Ep.* 59. *Cf.* Tert. *Adv. Iud.*; Commod. *Instr.* I. 37.
[2] *Cf.* Cypr. *Ep.* I.

bishops in inquiring about the fitness for ordination of candidates put forward by the congregations. In towns the clergy usually lived on the collegiate system, and were paid.

Persecution was not long in making itself felt, and all the chief eras of persecution claimed many martyrs in Africa. Family rites would be interrupted by the withdrawal of individual members who had been won to the new religion, military service would be refused, sacrifices to the emperor's genius scornfully rejected. The existing Acts of the African martyrs,[1] beginning with those who suffered at Scilli in 180, well illustrate the high spirit of the converts, their uncompromising hostility to everything that savoured of heathendom, and also the consideration of the higher Roman officials, who could not help admiring the courage of their victims, though compelled to resort to repressive measures, both by the orders of their superiors and by the feeling that Christianity was dividing the empire at a time when barbarians were most aggressive. In the interval between 180 and 198 the See of Carthage was formed, an African priest was raised to the papacy as Victor I., and as many as seventy bishops met in council at Carthage. The Gospel also began to extend to the native races.

Yet an insidious evil made itself felt in the intervals of persecution, the tendency to worldliness which, partly owing to the poverty of the converts, partly to the example of the luxurious life around, caused many relapses. We hear of bishops who had their

[1] *Cf.* R. Knopf, *Ausgewählte Märtyreracten* (1901).

sees bought for them, others who, having lost their means of livelihood, engaged in commerce, agriculture, even usury and the slave-trade.[1] Among priests were found makers of idols and of incense (still a heathen accessory), and the laity included astrologers and theatrical trainers.[2]

The fanatical spirit, united to the proneness to asceticism which characterized the more serious believers, displayed itself in a number of instances, usually exercising a disastrous and dividing influence. The Phrygian heresy of Montanism, which carried away Tertullian in his old age, showed tendencies towards the deification of the Virgin, probably due to the early associations of Montanus, who had been a priest of Cybele. The features, however, which attracted converts in Africa were rather its asceticism, and the severity which denied all hope of salvation to apostates, and regarded flight from persecution as a crime. In the middle of the third century the most burning question was the supposed necessity of rebaptizing converted heretics, a practice first introduced by Agrippinus, Bishop of Carthage, and confirmed by Cyprian with the consent of the bulk of the African Church. In this instance the austerer party prevailed; and though in the next two schisms the more lenient policy at last won the day, the Catholic community suffered severe losses. Novatianism, which sought to exclude from restoration to

[1] *Cf.* Cypr. *De Laps.* V. 6.

[2] Tert. *De Idolatr.* VII. 9; Cypr. *Ep.* II.; Aug. *De Bapt.* VII. 45.

communion those who had fallen and sacrificed to idols during the persecution of Decius, found numbers of adherents. Still stronger was the influence of the Donatist faction, which seems to represent the impatience felt by native races of Roman methods of thought and rule, and in particular stood out against any leniency towards the *traditores* of Diocletian's reign. This heresy lasted till, and materially aided, the Vandal conquest, and there sprang from it a phenomenon characteristic of the zeal of the Africans, quite capable of degenerating into ferocity. The Circumcelliones of Numidia were bodies of Punic-speaking peasants, half friars, half bandits, acknowledging no rule and possessing no property or home. They would wander about among the *cellæ* of the country-people, begging or robbing; and having nothing to lose and being fearless of death, they became ready instruments in the hands of designing Donatist leaders, who organized them in opposition to the imperial government. Shouting their war-cry of *Deo laudes!* they gathered in large bodies, which more than once in the fourth century committed massacres among the inhabitants of Cirta and neighbouring towns.[1]

The Carthaginian Church from the outset assumed a leading position, and first gave its bishop the famous title of *Papa*. The bishopric was an office of great power, especially in the time of Cyprian, about whose wide, almost universal, authority traditions long lin-

[1] Optat. III. 68; Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* 132, 3; Isid. *De Hæres.* 54.

gered in other provinces.[1] The Christians here included many persons of wealth, who set the example of combating the plague which desolated the city during Cyprian's episcopate, and later did something to alleviate the distress of the vast body of poor. Separate *areæ* or burial-places were secured for the converts by the third century, and as the number of basilicæ grew distinguished persons or martyrs came to be buried in these. The shrines of the martyrs, in which a vessel supposed to contain some of their blood was often preserved, sometimes became objects of idolatrous veneration, or unseemly festivities took place in connection.[2] Acts of the martyrs began to be collected at an earlier date than in most provinces, and their *natalitia*, or the anniversary of their suffering, were celebrated with great reverence. Especially was this true of Cyprian's day (September 14), which became a festival for the whole province, so that even the trade-winds which usually blew about that time were known as 'Cyprian's winds.'[3] Among the twenty-two churches which Carthage possessed in the fourth century, the great basilica outside the walls, with its nine aisles and three-lobed *martyrium*, was especially conspicuous.

The great influence of Carthage on Church history was due partly to the ability and high character of its

[1] Greg. Naz. 24, 7.

[2] Aug. *De Mor. Eccl. Cath.* 34.

[3] Procop. *Bell. Vand.* I. 20. Pilgrimages from other provinces were often made to Cyprian's shrine.

bishops, partly to its distance from the centre of imperial government as compared with the Roman see. After the removal of the seat of empire under Constantine, Carthaginian influence waned. Worldly and insincere converts, still heathens at heart, flocked to join the dominant creed; earnest men retired to the smaller towns and country districts; monks were openly insulted in the street; and Carthage abandoned itself to that revel of luxury, profligacy, and utter want of principle, showing that all creeds had lost their influence, which we find described in the pages of Salvian and Augustine, and which was only interrupted by the barbarian invasion.

The Christian community was at first mainly Greek-speaking, but this language was little understood among the middle and lower classes in Africa, and at an earlier period than in Italy it was found advisable to prepare versions of the Scriptures written in the popular dialect current in the province. Some portions of the *Vetus Itala* may have been of African origin, but there seem to have been in existence many concurrent Latin translations of parts of the Scriptures, the choice among which was left to individual bishops; and quotations from several of these are preserved in the works of African Fathers. The African pope Victor set the example of publishing Latin theological treatises, and the African teachers strongly opposed the study of Greek classical authors and philosophers.[1] Christianity thus came to be essentially Latin, and received in Africa those charac-

[1] *Cf.* Tert. *De Præsc. Hær.* VI.; Cypr. *Ep.* 35.

teristics which were afterwards reimposed on Italy and on the whole West. At an early date the learned men and pleaders who placed their knowledge at the disposal of the Church enabled it to meet on equal ground the hostility of the philosophical schools; and Tertullian's 'free and unhesitating genius' has a good claim to the honour of having formed the new theological Latin, coloured indeed with Hebrew or Hellenistic idioms, but mainly an outcome of the ordinary rhetorical style of the day, not exempt from poetical forms and phraseology.

Q. Septimius Florens Tertullianus was born at Carthage of heathen parents about A.D. 160, and though the son of a centurion he became a distinguished rhetorician. He appears to have undergone the influence of Apuleius, for some of his works, such as the preface to the *Pallium*, with its succession of couplets, are clearly modelled on the manner of the author of the *Florida*. After his conversion Tertullian turned to polemical writing, and the style evolved by his passionate eloquence and vivid imagination is strongly characteristic of the peculiarities of the African genius. He felt little of Fronto's predilection for the antiquated Latin of the republic; his phraseology is that of the courts or the platform. Usually, however, he is too much in earnest to pay great attention to form; harshness and incongruity mark many passages; common words are used in strained senses; similar expressions are accumulated for the sake of emphasis; and short epigrammatical phrases, often strongly elliptical, occasionally recall the

manner of Seneca's philosophical works. In the invention of new words and forms Tertullian displays great skill, producing a theological vocabulary which enabled the Latin Church to hold its own to some extent against the flexibility and vast power of growth inherent in the Greek language.

The rhetorician Thascius Cæcilius Cyprianus, also, according to Suidas, a native of Carthage, was converted by Cæcilius in 246, became bishop of the city in 248, and perished during the persecution of Valerian six years later. Cyprian's letters and treatises mark an advance on the immature manner of Tertullian, avoiding his harsh Hellenistic idioms. His language, more level, elegant, and polished, than that of most Africans, proves him to have been a good scholar; and he edited a dictionary of Ciceronian phraseology, besides writing a treatise on the *Notæ Tironianæ* which lasted down to the Middle Ages. The theological works, especially the *Ad Donatum*, show a considerable debt to Seneca, with reminiscences of Vergil and Seneca's tragedies. In many places he exhibits a desire to improve on earlier Biblical versions, striving to find Latin equivalents for the Greek or Hebrew words which had crept into popular religious language.[1] Shrinking, too, from the vulgarisms by the help of which Tertullian had made his dissertations forcible and popular, Cyprian adopts stately and less usual phrases, together with alliteration, rhyme,

[1] Cf. Dr. E. W. Watson, *Style and Language of St. Cyprian*, or examples.

poetical diction, and a symmetrical arrangement of balanced clauses. Rhetorician as he was, he strongly appreciated the attractiveness of heathen rhetorical and mystical treatises, such as those of Apuleius, and himself produced books in something of the same style, *e.g.*, the *Ad Donatum*—with the object of setting forth Christianity also as a mystery, only to be attained to through revelation, for the time ignoring its moral teaching. The rhetorical devices of Apuleius reappear in such works, not because Cyprian consciously follows him, but because both had been educated in the declamatory schools of Africa.

Cyprian to a large extent frees himself from these trammels of rhetoric, and rises to his highest level in the pastoral epistles, designed to strengthen converts or to mediate between conflicting parties in the Church. They display a grace worthy of the *Epistles* of Pliny, together with an earnestness and sincerity rare in African writers.

If we could imagine Apuleius converted to Christianity, and forsaking his frivolous declamations for a stern denunciation of the errors which he had abandoned, we should have an idea of the rhetorician of Sicca, who, after keeping a school of rhetoric so famous as to draw pupils (including Lactantius himself) from all Roman Africa, composed under Diocletian that tremendous diatribe against almost the whole civilization of antiquity, known as *Libri VII adversus Nationes*. There is the same archaic tinge, the same love of variety, in Arnobius as in the author of the *Metamorphoses*. Both display a rhetorical lack

of moderation, both delight in the accumulation of similar expressions, crowded epithets, asyndeta, and the elaboration of detached episodes.

Ignorant, as it appears, of the Old Testament, and only imperfectly acquainted with the New,[1] so ill-informed about orthodox Christianity as to put forward notorious Gnostic errors[2] as the tenets of the whole Church, Arnobius while still a catechumen, in order to prove the sincerity of his conversion, composed these seven books in a style compounded of the ordinary declamatory manner of his day and of a large element of ante-classical idiom. He owes little or nothing to Christian predecessors in the West. Clement of Alexandria is imitated in places but Arnobius is more familiar with Homer, Sophocles, Plato, the Orphica, and in Latin with Lucretius and Varro.

After a brief and inadequate defence of Christianity against the charge of bringing misfortune on the empire, Arnobius turns to the task most congenial to himself, and proceeds to paint the licentiousness and degrading tendency of heathen religions in the coarsest and most glaring colours. The last books are occupied with denunciations of temple-worship, idolatry, sacrifices, and dramatic representations, the plays of Sophocles being placed on a level with the lowest mimes, as equally derogatory to the dignity of the deities concerned in them. His manner is throughout that of a rhetorician rather than of a preacher. In order to produce a highly coloured picture, he gathers

[1] I. 46. [2] I. 62, II. 36.

together crude Nature myths which had long survived in Greek popular festivals, the gross superstitions of Egypt, and the demon-worship of Rome before the Punic wars, and then claims that this heterogeneous mass of cults corresponded to the belief of contemporary paganism. Thus, the chief value of the book consists in the large amount of antiquarian lore here gathered together, much of it unknown from any other source.

However great in Church history are the names of Lactantius and of Augustine of Tagaste, their works do little to illustrate the characteristics of specifically African literature. During the fourth century several causes combined to effect a quasi-classical revival in the western provinces, and provincialism, which during the dead period between the Antonines and the reunion of the empire by Constantine had threatened to invade all literature, for a time subsided. Christianity, when once adopted by the governing classes, had little to fear and much to gain from the study of classical writers; and even the pagans of the West were stimulated by an increasing rivalry with the nascent 'Greek Empire' to withdraw from their dependence on that foreign language, and seek to revive the past glories of their own. African literature as a separate school ceases with the reign of Constantine; some of its characteristics had been imprinted on the whole Latin world, more had been overborne by the influence of classical revivals, and of extended intercourse with Spain, Italy, and Gaul. This reacted to some extent even on spoken Latin,

and while in the second and third centuries Africa had taken the lead in elevating vulgar speech to be the language of literature, in the sixth and seventh a purer Latin was probably spoken there than in any other province.

CHAPTER IX

VANDAL AND BYZANTINE PERIODS

Ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ παλαιὸν λόγον ἐν Καρχηδόνι εἰρῆσθαι, ὡς τὸ γ διώξει τὸ β, καὶ πάλιν τὸ β διώξει τὸ γ· νυνὶ δὲ τετέλεσται, πρότερον γὰρ Γιζέριχος Βονιφάτιον ἐξεδίωξε, νῦν δὲ Βελισάριος Γελίμερα.—THEOPHANES.

Ἄνδρες Ῥωμαῖοι, μᾶλλον δὲ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ποτὲ λείψανα δυστυχῆ. —*Anon. Monodia.*

THE later part of the fourth century witnessed a steady decline in the prosperity of the African provinces, and a growing spirit of disaffection in the native tribes. Thus, Firmus the Moor came forward as a real national representative, assuming the diadem as an independent monarch, not a mere chief of banditti like Tacfarinas in earlier years; and his revolt, as well as that of his brother Gildo, could only be suppressed by enlisting other chiefs in support of the Roman authority. The provincials themselves steadily refused to serve in the army, an attempt to enforce a levy at Carthage led to a popular outbreak, and the province had to be left to the protection of Moorish auxiliaries and some bodies of German mercenaries.

The benefits resulting from the complete establishment of Christianity had been largely neutralized by

the fierce persecution of heathens and heretics which ensued, a persecution that at length forced the powerful Donatists to declare openly against the empire. In the country districts serfage, a branch of the corporation system, that curse of the later principate, had grown up during the fourth century. Rent was paid by the *coloni* in money or kind to the owners of the large estates, and the former were forbidden to leave the land on pain of losing all their property. The owners themselves were the local *decuriones*, an office so much hated owing to the exactions of governors and other officials that the *curiæ* had sometimes to be filled up with outlaws or Jews.

With all these elements of unrest about it, Carthage, as proud and luxurious as ever, was seen to be defenceless, and in 424, when the barbarian invasion was already threatening, Theodosius allowed it to be fortified, for the first time since the days of the younger Scipio. Five years later the Vandals landed in Africa, and were joined by large bands of marauding Moors, and by the persecuted Donatists who shared with the Arian invaders in a common hatred towards the Catholic Church. Carthage was not surprised till 439, for the Vandals had little skill in attacking walled towns. When the province was entirely reduced the conquerors showed great harshness, especially towards the larger proprietors and the Church, the mainstays of Roman rule in Africa. The former lost their lands, and were banished or sank to the condition of *coloni;* the wealthier clergy were also expelled from their possessions, and the

Arian form of worship as far as possible established, opponents being forced or cajoled into allowing themselves to be rebaptized. All the best lands were transferred to Germans, who held them without tax, and those remaining to the Romans were burdened with heavy dues, and often in consequence left waste.[1] Even on the Vandal lands agriculture was neglected, and the consequent distress was heightened by famine and Moorish inroads. There was no real financial organization; wealth was derived chiefly from booty and from the gains of the powerful piratical fleet which the Vandals kept up, thereby diverting sailors from maritime trade and provoking retaliation from neighbouring peoples.[2] At home the Vandals spent their time in hunting and gaming.

Yet the richness of the country was such that commerce did not altogether cease, and the strong hand of the new rulers suppressed the tendency to internal strife which had long weakened the African provinces. Corn was exported to Spain and Gaul, marble was still quarried, and mining, especially in iron, was encouraged. The purple dye works also held their own, and there was a lively trade in slaves, either prisoners or negroes. From the East, too, were imported jewels, silks, and other articles of luxury, which were much sought after by the ruling caste.

Their German dialect was retained during the first generation,[3] and probably the Bible used in the Arian

[1] *Cf.* Procop. *B. Vand.* I. 5; Papencordt, *Gesch. der Vand. Herrschaft in Africa.*

[2] Sid. Apoll. *Ep.* 23.

[3] *Cf.* Vict. Vit. I. 5, II. 18.

churches was the well-known Gothic version of Ulfilas; but Latin came soon to be generally understood, being needed for trade and intercourse with other Mediterranean states. Nor did the Vandals prove themselves inaccessible to humanizing influences, however much the epigrammatists might mock at their rough Teutonic speech.[1] Their later kings were well educated. Thrasamund studied theological controversies, and inscribed Latin acrostic lines on the baths which he raised at Carthage.[2] While on their first arrival the barbarians had caused great havoc in the city, destroying many public buildings, basilicæ, and the new fortifications, under Thrasamund (496-523) a palace and church arose, a new town called Allicana was founded in the vicinity, and at a distance of five miles a royal country-seat was laid out at Chrasis (Grasse), surrounded by parks full of limpid streams and countless plantations of fruit-trees.[3] The theatre of Carthage was restored, and even Greek dramas were occasionally performed, mostly, it appears, in dumb show. Some attempt had already been made to restore external decency by a rigid enforcement of marriage laws and other social measures.[4]

Prosperity in the country districts also revived to

[1] Bährens, *Poet. Lat. Min.* IV. 429:
'Inter *eils* goticum *scapia matzia ia drincan*,
Non audet quisquam dignos educere versus.'

[2] Fulg. *Adv. Trasim.* I. 2.

[3] Theophanes, *Chron.*, p. 191.

[4] Salv. *Gub. D.* VII. 20; *cf.* Dracont. VI. 81, 82.

some extent from the more determined resistance to Moorish inroads.[1] A contemporary poet has left a description of the country seat of the German baron Fridamal, rich with marbles, statues, and paintings, including a picture of the master killing a wild-boar.[2]

In the reign of the same Thrasamund an interesting literary revival took place. African writers who lived soon after the Vandal conquest, such as Priscian the grammarian, and the poet Domnulus, a friend of Sidonius, had retired to foreign countries; but towards the end of the fifth century a group of authors appear at Carthage under the auspices of the rhetorician and grammarian Felicianus (the instructor of Dracontius), who united Vandals and Romans at his lectures.[3]

A curious consequence followed from the fact that the ruling powers were out of harmony with the bulk of the Roman population in religious matters. For nearly two centuries African literature had been almost exclusively polemical or theological, but as these subjects became dangerous the more educated members of Carthaginian society attempted a classical revival, which was patronized by the Vandals, ready enough to divert the attention of their subjects. Towards the end of their period of rule a certain Octavianus of Carthage, on the invitation of a Vandal prince, formed an anthology of poems of this school.

[1] Coripp. *Joh.* III. 67.
[2] Luxorius, 458.
[3] *Cf.* Dracont. *Præf.*, 12 *et seq.*

It passed into Europe, and in the next century was mostly incorporated in the *Codex Salmasianus*, which also contains the *Pervigilium Veneris*.

Dracontius, who suffered imprisonment under the persecuting king Gundamund (484-496), was the chief poet of the group, and for his age writes correctly[1] and with some true feeling. Besides religious poems, *de laudibus Dei*, which include a fine account of the Creation, he left a number of short epics, chiefly on mythological subjects, having a strong rhetorical flavour, and often arranged undisguisedly as forensic contests; further, two epithalamia and some elegiac poems. Dracontius shows a good knowledge of the Latin classics, and makes use of Vergil, Ovid, Statius, and Claudian.

A long dreary hexameter poem, usually called the *Orestis Tragedia*, is sometimes ascribed to Dracontius, and the remarkable though unpleasant *Ægritudo Perdicæ* probably originates in the same circle, since the story, elsewhere unknown, is mentioned in the Hylas poem of Dracontius.

The *Epistle of Dido* is of value as illustrating the complete break-up of the hexameter by means of a refrain which in every few lines produces a pause at the hephthemimeral cæsura. Under an earlier king, Hunneric (477-484), a certain Cato sang of the monarch's naval undertakings, and complimentary

[1] The cæsura is generally careful, but rhythm sometimes overpowers metrical quantity, as mītescit, senectŭs, mulīeris. Long vowels before *h* are shortened, and *quia* may replace the accusative and infinitive.

poems on Thrasamund have been left by Florentinus and Flavius Felix. Of Coronatus there remain a lament in the Vergilian manner and some short epigrams. A revival of the epigram took place in contemporary Italy, of which Ennodius is an example, and we have from the African court circle numerous poems on baths, pictures, and buildings; also epitaphs, centos, etc. The occasional poems of the epigrammatist Luxorius, who rivals the coarseness and servility, but not the wit, of Martial, throw some light on the conditions of the time, and contain many allusions to the public games, buildings, and works of art, under the later Vandal monarchy. He is on the whole a correct writer, displaying real metrical knowledge, and he avails himself of the glyconic, elegiambic, asclepiad, anapæstic, and other measures.

The chief prose works are the ecclesiastical histories of Victor Vitensis and Optatus, and a mythological treatise by Planciades Fulgentius, who probably wrote under Hilderic (523-530).

By the time the sixth Vandal king, Gelimer, had come to the throne, the spirit of this small Teutonic settlement had become enervated by its ninety years' sojourn under an African sun, surrounded by unaccustomed luxury and splendour. Cut off by differences of religion and of habits, they had not succeeded in coalescing with the subject population, and were able to offer but slight opposition to Justinian's army of Huns, Scythians, and Heruli, who invaded the province under the able leadership

of Belisarius and Johannes. Many Vandals were taken away to Constantinople or drafted into the emperor's forces in Asia, and after a further outbreak against the authority of the eastern empire all adult males of Vandal race who could be found in Africa were removed to other provinces, and the small remains of the Germanic invaders disappeared amidst the mixed population of the province.

The Roman dominions, however, now extended only to the Ampsaga river on the west, with a few outposts in Mauritania; and in the course of the next half-century the incursions of the Moors, encouraged by the successful brigandage of the Vandals and by the long period of anarchy, gradually reduced them to a third of the size of Italy.

Justinian and his immediate successors showed great solicitude for the reconquered province; fortified posts were erected along the southern frontier, the materials of towns ruined in the border warfare were used for constructing fortresses, and *clausulæ*, or long walls, blocked the most important passes. New towns also arose, others received thermæ, aqueducts, and fountains.[1] Numerous flourishing monasteries were established. Many, like the Mandracium on the coast near Carthage, and at Theveste in the south, erected by the distinguished general Solomon, were enclosed by fortifications. Others are found in the Hadrumetine district, consisting of a series of vaulted chambers with enclosing

[1] *Cf.* Evagr. *Hist. Eccl.* IV. 18.

walls. Such establishments often became centres of considerable settlements, and the soldier-monks who were charged with their defence were in a manner the forerunners of the later mediaeval military Orders.

Carthage, now the seat of the African vicar, was so much transformed as to be spoken of by Procopius as a *νέα Καρχηδών*. The Vandal palace again became the residence of the governor; a fine church and thermæ were added.[1] Important fortifications protected the harbour, and near the shore the square called *forum maritimum* was surrounded by a double range of porticoes. In other towns, also, much rebuilding was carried out, and Byzantine architecture figures extensively in the eastern parts of the province. Nor were the other arts altogether neglected. Marble bas-reliefs found at Carthage in sixth-century basilicæ, representing the Adoration of the Magi and the Appearance of the Angels to the Shepherds, are among the best of their age. Mosaics also were still much employed, and those in some of the tombs supply good evidence about the costumes of a little-known period.[2] They are still Eastern in character; men have long green or white dalmatics with broad bands of embroidery, and a triangular cloak of brown wool, with a handkerchief or *orarium* round the neck. Women wear tight clinging dresses embroidered at the wrists and waist, and held in by a red girdle. Over this is a wide tunic with large sleeves of bright colours;

[1] Procop. *Æd.* 339; *B. Vand.* 474, 523.

[2] *Cf. Rev. Tunisienne*, 1896, p. 315.

jewels adorn the breast, and a light scarf flows over the shoulders. Children wear white tunics with bands of colour, and short yellow or red trousers.

The zeal shown by the emperors in the restoration and defence of these remote dependencies deserves recognition, and, indeed, met with some reward when one of the strongest rulers that Constantinople ever possessed set out from his native Carthage with a powerful force, dethroned the incompetent Phocas, and brought to a final issue the age-long strife between Greek and Persian.

The *duces*, or military governors, in Africa, of whom one was stationed at Cirta, were frequently men of great ability, but the civil administration, closely modelled on the Byzantine type, was the worst that Africa had yet experienced.[1] The heavy taxation imposed, the resumption of long-alienated imperial estates, and the persecution of Arians and other heretics, all helped to impoverish and divide the Roman population; and the natives were perpetually goaded into rebellion, and eventually driven into the arms of the Moslems.

Municipal government survived in Carthage and some other towns, and was reorganized by Justinian, who also attempted to restore higher education in the capital. Other African towns as well had schools of grammar and rhetoric at this period.[2] The literary movement of the later Vandal age continued, but closer connection with the East placed

[1] *Cf.* Diehl, *L'Afrique Byzantine.*

[2] Junilius, *De Partibus Div. Leg.*, præf.

it out of harmony with that of neighbouring provinces. Greek was now on a level with Latin as the official language, and was familiar to the African theologians, though not widely spoken among the provincials. Eastern customs also appear. Indictions are observed at Carthage and Cirta; Oriental relics are revered; and churches at Carthage were dedicated to St. Julian of Antioch and St. Isidore of Chios. There was also much trade with Constantinople.[1]

Literary works are almost all theological and cease before A.D. 600. The chief are the ecclesiastical history of Victor Tunnunensis, the Scriptural commentaries of Primasius of Hadrumetum, which display a good knowledge of Greek, and poems on theological subjects by Verecundus.

The inmates of African monasteries carefully studied and preserved valuable manuscripts, which were the first care of the monks when a hostile attack was expected.[2] Cassiodorus[3] naturally sent to some of these for treatises with which to stock the library of his new religious house.

The poems of Corippus (*flor. c.* A.D. 550) deserve a passing mention, as being among the last written by one to whom Latin was a mother-tongue. A *grammaticus*, or country schoolmaster,[4] he rose in the civil

[1] Procop. *B. Vand.* 393; *Cod. Just.* III. 90.

[2] Hildef. *De Vir. Ill.* IV.

[3] *De Inst. Div. Lit.* VIII. 29.

[4] *Cf. Joh.* præf. 25:

'Quidquid ego ignarus quondam per rura locutus
Urbis per populos carmina mitto palam.'

service of the empire, and was sent on several important missions. His chief works, *Johannis* and *In Laudem Justini*, display a fluent style, inspired by Vergil and Claudian, with occasional reminiscences of Ovid, Lucan, and Statius. The metre is hexameter, with elegiac prologue. Cæsura is much neglected; words not otherwise admissible are altered in quantity, Greek words especially being carelessly treated. The former poem throws some light on the condition of this small outpost of a decaying civilization, already on the confines of the Middle Ages, and in a century destined to be swallowed up in the flood of Oriental fanaticism. Especially does it illustrate the great native revival, coincident with the gradual withdrawal of the Roman power, a revival characteristic of that vigorous race which eventually destroyed all traces of European civilization, for generations withstood, and at last profoundly modified that of the Arab conquerors.

For nearly four centuries a small body of Roman Christians lingered on *in partibus infidelium*. In 698 Carthage had been pillaged by the Moslems and defaced, but its principal buildings were not destroyed, and long continued to supply stone and marbles for Arabic and Italian communities. A few clergy under their archbishop remained in what was now a mere township, and watched over the relics of Cyprian, the Scillitan and other martyrs, until, as a compliment to Charlemagne, these were removed to France by order of Haroun al Raschid, Caliph of Bagdad. A few other Christian congregations

existed, retaining Latin for services, but probably resigning themselves to the use of Arabic in ordinary life. In the eleventh century there were five bishops to represent the 600 who had presided over the African churches before the Vandal conquest. Yet it was in this season of deep humiliation that the Roman pontiff issued a decree intended to safeguard for ever the metropolitan rights of the See of Carthage.[1] Even these few clergy were not united, and we hear of the archbishop Cyriacus being imprisoned by the Arabs at the instigation of some of his own followers. To him Pope Gregory VII. addressed a letter of consolation, with renewed assurances that the primacy should remain to it, 'whether the Church of Carthage should still lie desolate or rise again in glory.'[2] In 1076 Cyriacus was again at liberty, but there was only one other Christian bishop left in Africa. Thenceforward these 'unhappy remnants of the race once Roman' fade from the pages of history.

[1] Leo IX. in *Patr. Lat.* 143, Ep. 83 (A.D. 1053): 'Noveris ergo procul dubio quia post Romanum pontificem primus archiepiscopus et totius Africæ maximus metropolitanus est Carthaginiensis episcopus.'

[2] *Patr. Lat.* 148.

CHAPTER X

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE STYLE AND LANGUAGE OF AFRICAN WRITERS

'En ecce præfamur veniam si quid exotici sonuero ac si quid forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero.'—APULEIUS.

THE great extent of the African country, thinly populated by Romans or Romanized barbarians, involved a low level of culture, especially in the outlying districts, in spite of the efforts made by the rhetorical schools to keep out barbarisms. Even after a period of study at Carthage, an African might have to undertake a journey to Rome before any real literary activity could be entered on.

The African Christian literature of the third century throws much light on the processes which led to the grammatical decay of spoken Latin and the evolution of the Romance languages. In these parts, cut off as they were from the main stream of classical tradition, the popular element in the language had exercised unusual influence, and the decay was exceptionally rapid. Forms which did not become common in Spain for two centuries more may there be found in use by the time of Cyprian. Further, as Roman civilization in Africa

perished utterly under the Arabic dominion, this dialect merely represents the ordinary directions in which Latin was liable to degenerate. It exercised little influence on the formation of the existing Romance languages, except indirectly through African versions and patristic works. Yet we may find in it forms which afterwards became exclusively French, Spanish, or Italian. It cannot be doubted, though the scarcity of literary monuments of the other western provinces for the period A.D. 150-300 makes it difficult to prove, that many so-called Africanisms were current in other parts of the empire. The Africans, in fact, were no indigenous race. Even after the colonies despatched by Cæsar and Augustus, immigration continued for some time, gradually lessening as Italy became more depopulated towards the end of the Flavian period. Traces of Punic or Libyan influences are few and doubtful, and the reason why African Latin deserves study is really the fact that it was no local patois, but represents the concentration of most of the forces which were to break up the language.

The works of less educated Christians are important in this connection. The Church in Africa at first definitely discouraged the study of heathen antiquity, and many converts who had received no real literary training found occasion to commit to writing their ordinary spoken dialect, either in form of letters, chronicles of martyrdoms, or polemical and hortatory theological works. While Tertullian, Cyprian, and Arnobius, who were all

well acquainted with classical models, only slightly reflect the tendencies of their countrymen, these are clearly marked in works like the Acts of the Martyrs, the epistles of Lucianus, Celerinus, and other correspondents of Cyprian, the anonymous treatise *De Rebaptismate*, and many Christian inscriptions.

A large number of German monographs and magazine articles have been published, since the appearance of Sittl's *Die Lokalen Verschiedenheiten der Lat. Sprache* in 1882, on the subject of African Latin, some maintaining, others rejecting, the existence of a special African dialect. The general results seem to be—(1) Local peculiarities did exist, but can seldom be detected now, owing to the absence of literary works from other parts at the same period. (2) Vulgarisms were more widespread and more ready to creep into literature than in other provinces. (3) Corruptions, such as those which led to the formation of the Romance languages, appear very early in Africa.

So many lists of supposed African peculiarities have been published that I here confine myself almost entirely to the last point.

Orthography and Pronunciation.

As in other provinces at a later date, there is frequent confusion between *b* and *v*; according to Isidore,[1] forms like bita, birtus, boluntas, were common in Africa, and this is borne out by inscriptions,

[1] App. III., p. 504 (Arev.).

especially those of the earlier Christian period. Probably the sound of both was intermediate between *b* and *v*, as in modern Spanish. For similar confusions *cf.* abuelo (avulum), brebis (vervecem).

Mn was contracted to *mm* or *m*, as Volumius, im mentem ;[2] *cf.* allumer (allum'nare), semer (sem'nare).

Ad before *m* was contracted to *amm* or *am ;* in Apuleius amirabilior, in Dracontius ammisit, ammotis.[3] This is normal in Italian, as ammirare, ammettere.

In inscriptions *cr* sometimes replaces *tr ;* as, Aucronia, macri ;[4] *cf.* craindre, from tremere.

Some traces exist of the prefixing of a vowel to *s* impure; as, Ispes (a proper name in a Rusicade inscription), isposa, etc. So in Italian ispirito, isposo, in Spanish espeso (spissum), especioso.

Africans are accused by grammarians of some peculiarity in the pronunciation of *l*, which they are said to double even when initial.[5] The little influence that *l* has on the preceding syllable in popular verse[6] suggests that it had a liquid sound, the double letter resembling Spanish *ll*.

[1] *E.g., Eph. Epigr.* VII. 430 : *Bixxit, requiebi ; cf. sublimabit* (perf.) in the best MSS. of Apul. *Flor.* II.

[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 2482.

[3] *Cf.* Klussmann, *Curæ Africanæ*, on Apul. l.c.

[4] *C. I. L.* VIII. 654, 373.

[5] Consent. 394, 27 ; Pomp. *Comm. art. Donat.*, 286, 34.

[6] *Cf.* Commod. *Instr.* I. 7, 1, făllit ; *ib.* 11, vŭlnera ; *ib.* 11, 1, Apŏllinem.

Accidence.

Variations here proceed from an impatience of irregularity and of a multitude of different forms. Neuter plurals are confused with feminines in *a*, in words like *missa, promissa, remissa*,[1] and *fortia* (the original of fuerza, forza, force) may replace *vis*.[2] So in French feuille (foliam), fée (fatam).

Genders are fluctuating: *e.g.*, *plasma*,[3] fem. as in Italian; *lactem*,[4] masc. (a Plautine revival), whence Italian 'latto'; *gentes*[5] masc. as in French. In adjectives the accusative neuter is being assimilated to the masculine form, a token that in time the neuter gender will disappear. Many instances occur in letters to Cyprian, and in the works of his friends, of phrases like *apud metallum Siguensem, talem peccatum, priorem delictum, duplicem crimen*. So in an inscription *artificius, ingenius*.[6]

The ending *-iam*, according to Augustine, was in favour in Africa for the future, and he accordingly uses *floriet* (*cf.* Italian fiorire), knowing it to be incorrect.[7] Deponent verbs are disappearing, an anteclassical active form being often substituted, and they have left hardly a trace in Romance. Second conjugation terminations are frequently weakened. Thus, Commodianus has *præbĕre, augĕre, merĕre; cf.* rire, taire, tordre, plaire, from riděre tacĕre, torquĕre, placĕre.

[1] Cypr. *Ep.* 64.
[2] Commod. *Apol.* 40.
[3] *Ibid.* 31.
[4] Cypr. *Ep.* 8.
[5] Comm. *Apol.* 345.
[6] *C. I. L.* VIII. 15,597.
[7] *Ps.* 138, 25.

Syntax.

Here a general relaxation of classical rules is perceptible. Cases are of diminishing importance; *rest* and *motion* are confused, the accusative tending to usurp the functions of the other cases, while prepositions are used freely and loosely. Subordinate clauses introduced by a conjunction replace the infinitive; the subjunctive is disappearing from conditional sentences and indirect speech. The final *m* of the accusative singular is frequently disregarded in popular poetry, and omitted altogether in inscriptions,[1] an indication that the nondescript 'objective case,' which appears side by side with the nominative in early French, and eventually supersedes it, had already acquired its indefinite termination. There are also examples of a plural in *s*,[2] adopted later both in French and Spanish.

The vulgar double comparative with *plus* or *magis*[3] is a step towards the universal formation of this degree with adverbs. As in some Romance languages, a preposition may accompany a comparative with the sense of *than*.[4] Numeral adjectives may be treated like nouns and combined with a genitive case.[5]

[1] Comm. *Apol.* 18; *Instr.* I. 6, 25; *C. I. L.* VIII. 7156.

[2] *C. I. L.* VIII. 3783, 'Filias fecerunt.' *Cf.* Comm. *Instr.* II. 26, 9, *lucernas;* II. 31, 1, *divitias* (nom. in each case, and read in both MSS.).

[3] Comm. *Apol.* 5; Arnob. I. 58; Coripp. *Just.* IV. 129.

[4] Cypr. *Ep.* 78, 2; Comm. *Apol.* 97.

[5] *E.g., denarium viginti* (une vingtaine), Apul. *Met.* I. 24; *cf.* VIII. 25.

The ablative of the gerund has almost the sense of a present participle, a use found occasionally in classical writers, and normal in Spanish and Italian. It may also take the place of a relative, generally casual, clause: *Cum diligentia fecisti mittendo Niceforum.*[1]

Indirect questions are frequently in the indicative, and may be introduced by *si*. *Quod*, *quia*, etc., with the indicative after verbs of 'saying and thinking' are extremely common.

Prepositions all have a tendency to be constructed with the accusative: *e.g.*, *ab*, *coram*, *cum*, *pro*; *in*, *sub* (expressing rest at a place), are all so used in the Christian literature of the third century.

Vocabulary and Uses of Words.

The employment of diminutives, whether revivals or new inventions, is a feature of the decay. Though common in the ante-classical period, few fresh diminutives were formed during the best age; and it was only with Flavian writers like Martial and Juvenal that they begin to reappear. Yet diminutives always remained popular with the lower orders, and thus constitute the source from which a great part of the Romance vocabulary is drawn. The process continued in literature through the age of Hadrian, and culminated in Apuleius, to whose dreamy and poetical style they were well suited;[2] but the desperate earnestness of the persecuted

[1] Cypr. *Ep.* 52.

[2] In Apuleius first occur *spinula* (épingle) *formicula* (*cf.* fourmiller), *somnulentus* (somnolent).

Christians shrank from these playful forms, few of which appear in their writings.[1]

Among noun suffixes *tor* and *trix* are very common; and in proper names an ending in *itta* occurs several times, a form very rare in Italy outside Etruria, but reappearing in Romance as *etta*, *ette*, etc.[2]

The strengthened pronouns *eccille*, etc., so much used in Romance, and prevalent in popular speech from the time of Plautus, reappear in literature with Apuleius.

Totus is in process of replacing *omnis*, an adjective which found little favour in Romance, though retained in Italian side by side with 'tutto.'

Ipse is replacing *idem* as the pronoun of identity,[3] the proper reflexive sense being now conveyed by *se* for all persons. Hence mismo, medesimo, même (metipsimum).

The number of adjective suffixes is remarkable; one of those which proved most productive in Romance is *aticus* (Sp. *aje;* It. *aggio;* Fr. *age*). Inceptive forms of verbs are often adopted in Romance to the exclusion of the simple stem; but as such inceptives are common in all provinces during the decay, the most interesting African feature is the use of the suffix *sco* in a curious causal sense, as *innotesco* (Tert.), *hilaresco* (Aug.), *dulcesco* (Fulg.); *cf.* such participles as adoucissant, finissant, also used transitively.

[1] An exception is *ovecula:* Tert. *Pall.* III. (Fr. ouailles, Sp. oveja).

[2] *Cf. Archiv. Lat. Lex.* VIII. 495.

[3] Comm. *Apol.* 92.

Of prepositional uses, *pro* for purpose, *cum* for instrument, *de* for possession, partition, instrument, or material, have analogies at later dates; and also double prepositions used adverbially, like *depost* (Fr. depuis), which is first found in Africa in a temporal sense.

Examples of the Early Appearance of Romance Words or Meanings.

Ballare, dance (from *βάλλειν*) (Aug.). Sp. *bailar;* It. *ballare.*

Cambire, change (Apul.). Sp. *cambiar;* It. *cambiare.*

Circare (*C.I.L.* VIII. 1027). It. *cercare;* Fr. *chercher.*

Concurrere, concur with (Tert., then Digests). Sp. *concurrir*, etc.

Confortare, strengthen, console (Cypr. *Ep.*). Sp. *confortar*, etc.

Discutere, debate on (Tert.). Sp. *discutir*, etc.

Exagium, scales (*C. I. L.* VIII. 3294). Sp. *ensaio;* It. *saggio;* Fr. *essai.*

Factio, factiousness (Cypr.). It. *fazione*, etc.

Hospitium, house (Apul., *Inscr.*). Sp. *hospizio*, etc.

Medietas, half (Tert., *Inscr.*). Sp. *mitad;* It. *metà;* Fr. *moitié.*

Minare, lead with threatening cries (Apul.). It. *menare;* Fr. *mener.*

Mittere, put, throw (*Act Mart.*). Sp. *metter*, etc.

Rememorari (Tert.). It. *rimembrare;* O. Fr. *remembrer.*

Stare, be (Commod.). Sp. *estar;* It. *stare.*

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